China Academic Library

Guy Alitto *Editor*

Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action

外语教学与研究出版社
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

Springer

China Academic Library

Academic Advisory Board:

Researcher Geng, Yunzhi, *Institute of Modern History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China*
Professor Han, Zhen, *Beijing Foreign Studies University, China*
Researcher Hao, Shiyuan, *Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China*
Professor Li, Xueqin, *Department of History, Tsinghua University, China*
Professor Li, Yining, *Guanghua School of Management, Peking University, China*
Researcher Lu, Xueyi, *Institute of Sociology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China*
Professor Wong, Young-tsu, *Department of History, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA*
Professor Yu, Keping, *Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, China*
Professor Yue, Daiyun, *Department of Chinese Language and Literature, Peking University, China*
Zhu, Yinghuang, *China Daily Press, China*

Series Coordinators:

Zitong Wu, *Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, China*
Yan Li, *Springer*

More information about this series at http://www.springer.com/series/11562

Guy Alitto
Editor

Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action

Springer

Editor
Guy Alitto
University of Chicago
Chicago, USA

ISSN 2195-1853 ISSN 2195-1861 (electronic)
China Academic Library
ISBN 978-3-662-47749-6 ISBN 978-3-662-47750-2 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015951434

Springer Heidelberg New York Dordrecht London
© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015
This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publishers, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.
The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.
The publishers, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publishers nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made.

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer-Verlag GmbH Berlin Heidelberg is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

Contents

1 Reconstituting Confucianism for the Contemporary World 1
Guy Alitto

Part I Confucianism in the Contemporary World of Thought

2 Some Historical and Methodological Reflections on *Ruxue* in Contemporary China 13
John Makeham

3 From Culture to Cultural Nationalism: A Study of New Confucianism of the 1980s and 1990s 27
Tze-ki Hon

4 A Study on Pre-Qin Confucian Scholars' Environmental Ethics 41
Qiyong Guo and Tao Cui

Part II Confucianism in the Contemporary World of Action

5 Building a Loho Homeland with Traditional Wisdom 63
Liao Xiaoyi

6 Modernizing Tradition or Restoring Antiquity as Confucian Alternatives: A View from Reading Wedding Rituals in Contemporary China 79
Margaret Mih Tillman and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman

Part III Liang Shuming: Joining the Worlds of Thought and Action

7 Liang Shuming: A Lifelong Activist 103
Guy Alitto

8 Confucianism as the Religion for Our Present Time: The Religious Dimension of Confucianism in Liang Shuming's Thought 113
Thierry Meynard

9 Liang Shuming's Conception of Democracy 131
Hongliang Gu

10 Humankind Must Know Itself 145
Peishu Liang

Chapter 1
Reconstituting Confucianism for the Contemporary World

Guy Alitto

In 1921, at the high tide of the New Culture Movement's iconoclastic attack on Confucius, Liang Shuming 梁漱溟 resonantly predicted that in fact the future world culture would be Confucian. In the following nine decades, Liang's reputation and the fortunes of Confucianism in China have risen and fallen together. Is it possible that a reconstituted "Confucianism" might become China's spiritual mainstream and a major constituent of world culture?

This volume is set to the theme of "theory" and "practice" of contemporary Confucianism, and how they relate to each other. Within that theme, it addresses several related issues:

1. What do we mean in contemporary intellectual discourse by the term "Confucianism?"
2. What is the relationship between popular "practiced" Confucianism and the philosophical doctrines that constitute the philosophical theories usually associated with it?
3. What is the relationship between Confucianism and what is perhaps the major contemporary challenge to humanity – degradation of the natural environment?
4. What is the relationship between Confucianism and perhaps the major contemporary challenge to humanity – degradation of the natural environment?
5. What is the historical position of Liang Shuming in regard to these questions?

G. Alitto (✉)
University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA
e-mail: galitto@uchicago.edu

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd
and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*,
China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_1

1.1 What Is Confucianism?

The term "Confucianism" as it has been used in Western and world discourses has carried an enormous variety of muddled meanings. Much confusion has resulted from the early Jesuit missionaries' turning the teachings of the ritual scholars (*ru* 儒) and the fundamental norms and presumably universal values of civilized human life into one hybrid "ism" to meet the cultural demands of Europe at the time. To make Confucianism comprehensible to the West, Matteo Ricci and his Jesuit colleagues performed two actions.

The first was to name an individual as the founder of an ism and create from him a name, along the lines of Christ and Christianity or Muḥammad and Islam. Ricci chose the sage Kongfuzi from among many sages who had been responsible for the creation of these teachings, values, and norms. Although Master Kong (Kongfuzi 孔夫子) was regarded as the "first" or "first ranked" sage since the beginning of the first millennium AD, he certainly was not the creator of a "doctrine" much less of a code of behavior.

The second action was to conflate the Chinese classics (together with subsequent commentaries and interpretations) and the shared norms of civilized behavior. Both became "Confucianism" in the West. This confusion of high theory and popular social practice is, I would submit, the source of the most serious problems in the discourse about "Confucianism."

This second action was required because of European assumptions about the nature of religion and religious dogma. In the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, written doctrines connected directly and firmly with fixed moral laws and behavioral rules. Conflicting interpretations of, and intense debates about, dogma had been prominent features of all three of these religions. These disputes were directly related to behavioral rules. The legal ramifications of doctrine had direct consequences for daily life, including clothing and diet. In Chinese traditions, however, there was no such link. There was literally no equivalent for the Western (and later world) concept of "Confucianism" in traditional Chinese discourse. To my mind, the closest reference to the Western concept (theory and practice) that might be made in traditional China would be "the way of the sages" (*shengxian zhi dao* 圣贤之道) which would have included some norms and values that predated Confucius.

Although it is true that the "Rules of Propriety and Status" (*li jiao ming jiao* 礼教名教) were sets of highly specific idealized models of social roles and behavior, these rules were not based unambiguously on particular written dogma. Although grounded in certain persistent general principles, they changed radically through time and certainly were not directly connected to any "orthodox" dogma. Thus, using the term "Confucianism" to refer to philosophical discourse and other theoretical ratiocinations, as engaged in by intellectuals, and the "universal" norms of civilized human life is to confuse the domain of theory and philosophy with that of social and political values and their behavioral referents. That is, the use of this term has always conflated self-consciously Confucian philosophy and the mundane communal domain of social mores and behavior; in other words, it is a confusion of theory and practice.

1.2 Confucianism a Religion?

Although the Jesuits did present their invented "Confucianism" in a fashion that would be understood by Europe, with its implicit comparison to Christianity, they did not present it as a religion, for to do so would have destroyed utterly their mission to China. To have done so would have set them and the Christian faith at odds with Chinese civilization as a whole. Rather, they presented "Confucianism" as a rationalist secular ethical code, not a set of rules set down by a supernatural lawgiver. Other popular Chinese religions – the array of traditions usually termed "Buddhist" or "Daoist" – were dismissed as mere superstition and not true religions at all.

The Jesuits shaped their Confucianism as an example of "natural theology" and even presented Confucius himself as a kind of proto-monotheist. This version of Confucianism and Confucius, along with the Chinese state, became idealized by Enlightenment thinkers like Voltaire. The Jesuit-manufactured China was a major inspiration and source for the Enlightenment movement. Indeed, it may be claimed that Confucius was the "patron saint" of the European Enlightenment.

In the twentieth century, some Chinese intellectuals ironically also saw Confucianism in terms similar to that presented to Europe by the Jesuits. The same hybrid of theory and practice "ism" became the standard in Chinese intellectual discourse. There was even an attempt to create a Western-style Confucian church based upon Confucian teachings (*Kongjiao* 孔教).

In an age of scientism, most intellectuals emphasized, however, the nonreligious nature of this entity, just as the Jesuits had. Even Liang Shuming, who emphasized that the core of Confucianism was "what makes humans human" (*ren zhi suo yi wei ren* 人之所以为人), ended up saying that it "functioned as a religion would without actually being one." The Western image of Confucianism, carried on by the late nineteenth-century Protestant missionaries, was also that of a non-religion. Twentieth-century Sinologists such as H. G. Creel similarly argued that Confucius was a rationalist philosopher not dissimilar to the European Enlightenment view of him. In the last decades of the twentieth century, however, a fundamental shift in the academic world reversed this assessment completely. Still relying upon the European presuppositions that informed the early Jesuits, many Western scholars such as Tu Weiming 杜维明 argued that "Confucianism" was a doctrine of immanent transcendence, that is, a true religion. This reversal of the centuries-long evaluation of the Jesuit and Protestant missionaries, twentieth-century Chinese intellectuals, and Western scholars met little opposition in the academic world, which by that time had set itself to the task of disowning the Enlightenment heritage in other dimensions as well. These scholars, however, spoke of religion in academic language to other academicians, and they spoke almost solely in "doctrinal" terms and almost never addressed the question of Confucianism in everyday practice.

1.3 New Confucianism

The "New Confucianism" (*Xin Rujiao* 新儒家) movement was a response to the "Western tides" of the May Fourth New Culture Movement. Although a founding father of New Confucianism, Xiong Shili 熊十力, did not seem to be responding as directly as fellow founding father Liang Shuming, in the context of the times, all of New Confucianism must be considered a response.

After 1949, this movement shifted from mainland China to Hong Kong, Taiwan, and overseas Chinese intellectuals. In the late 1980s a comparable movement developed in Mainland China which merged with New Confucianism as espoused elsewhere by Tang Junyi 唐君毅, Mou Zongsan 牟宗三, Tu Weiming, and Yu Ying-shih 余英时. In the past two decades, a considerable variety of notable New Confucians and Confucianisms have emerged. Some might be described as Confucian socialist and some Confucian liberals. Some are of a "culturalist" or "cultural nationalist" stripe, such as Jiang Qing 将庆, Tang Yijie 汤一介, Chen Lai 陈来, and Luo Yijun 骆以军, who might be considered "Confucian fundamentalists." They identify with the Hong Kong-Taiwan-Overseas New Confucianism and are implicitly critical of Marxism. Others, such as Fang Keli 方克立, Ren Jiyu 任继愈, Zhang Dainian 张岱年, and Li Jinquan 李锦全, are "Marxist Confucians" and more "state nationalist" than cultural nationalist. These two groups scarcely exhaust the varieties of New Confucianism. Some are Party members and some are not. They all share one quality; however: they are all intellectuals. Using the term "Confucianism" to refer to philosophical discourse and other high-level theoretical ratiocinations, as engaged in by such intellectuals, is once again to confuse the self-referential domain of theory and philosophy with social and political values and behavior. That is, the use of this term has always confused self-consciously Confucian philosophy and the "vulgar" or communal domain of social mores and behavior.

The New Confucianism phenomena might be read as, in the long run, merely the latest of transformations that Confucianism has undergone in history. Through the ages Confucians have reconstituted their ideas and practices countless times, showing that "Confucianism" in both theory and practice was Protean, capacious, and porous. The political, economic, and social transformations of the ninth to eleventh centuries Tang-Song transition were as momentous as those of the modernist challenge of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹, Wang Anshi 王安石, Su Dongpo 苏东坡, and their scholar-official friends and rivals used Confucian precepts to guide their political reformation of government and poetry, while Zhu Xi 朱熹, the Cheng 程 brothers, and their cohorts reconstituted Confucian philosophy in a fundamental way. Resonances with that process shed light on contemporary New Confucianism.

To return to the question of the confusion of theory and practice, I am not arguing that these two domains were not and are not intimately connected. Certainly the last millennium of traditional Chinese civilization produced a uniquely blurry line between what some anthropologists have termed the "great" and "little" traditions. Compared to most other societies, late imperial Chinese society achieved a singular

cultural homogeneity, so that "common decency" norms on which society based itself were indeed common to all classes and categories of people. This phenomenon came about partly because social and economic mobility were so great after the maturation of the examination system in the Song Dynasty that practices, mores, and ideologies traveled up and down the social and economic hierarchies accompanying the rise and fall of families. Illiterate farmers did indeed quote the classics without knowing it, and the elites participated in various folk religious practices.

There is nonetheless a gulf between the high level theological or spiritual discourse of Confucian scholars and the "Confucianism" that existed in society at large. It does not, as some might suggest, parallel to the relationship between theological discourse and everyday social and religious practice in monotheistic societies. In these societies, a direct connection between written "dogma" and religious codes of behavior is obvious. Moreover, the commandment "thou shalt have no strange gods before me" (which exists in all three major Abrahamic religious traditions) makes for a binary logic of belief and organization. One either believed the true dogma or was a heretic, heathen, or infidel. One was either a member of a religious communion or an outsider. In traditional China, in contrast, personal beliefs were truly personal. The civil service examination system was indeed based upon a particular version of philosophical Confucianism, but the exercise of taking the imperial examinations seemed to have been compartmentalized by the participants as evidenced by the handbooks made specifically for the purpose. What counted was action. Confucianism can be said to have had no enforced orthodoxy, but did have enforced orthopraxy.

Although "New Confucianism" might be an example of reconstituting Confucianism for China's postimperial, post-"feudal" era, it has been almost solely a closeted academic phenomenon, more of a scholastic exercise than a social or political movement or an influential force in society. A central question for the future of Confucianism is will it remain academic or will it be reconstituted as a social, political, and perhaps even spiritual force? This is the aspect of Confucianism (or New Confucianism) that interested Liang Shuming.

Although Liang Shuming could qualify as a founding father of New Confucianism, he himself probably wouldn't have accepted the label, in the same way that he refused to call himself a "scholar." He first achieved fame as an academic, but in the end he was not interested in development of new theoretical constructs. His reconstitution of Confucianism was a plan for action-rural reconstruction, and he seemed relatively unconcerned about the fate of Confucian theory or of such enterprises as national studies (*guoxue* 国学). He was interested in preserving and developing Confucianism as a sociopolitical movement that would constitute a potent force in the broad reaches of society. This is a sharp contrast to his friend and fellow founder of New Confucianism, Xiong Shili (熊十力), who passed his entire life as a cloistered scholar. Other New Confucianists outside of mainland China – Tang Junyi (唐君毅) and Mou Zongsan (牟宗三) – were similar to Xiong in this respect.

I suspect that these New Confucian academic constructions and discussions of national religions would not, I suspect, have interested Liang Shuming much. He

engaged in "thought" (he described himself to me as someone who "liked to think") only insofar as it could be fashioned into a basis for present practical action, to solve presented problems. His aspiration was to create a new way of life that would employ modern technologies (including organizational technologies) to blow into a fiery efflorescence the faint spark of Confucian culture he perceived to be remaining in the countryside. For him, the core of Confucianism lies not in texts but rather in social practice.

1.4 Confucianism and Religion

Another question that underlies our two large topics is the relationship between Confucianism and religion. The hoary question, first raised by the early Jesuit missionaries to China, "is Confucianism a religion?" has been from the outset a question that existed solely in a derivative discourse. As mentioned above, when Chinese intellectuals joined this discourse in the early twentieth century, they responded with two mutually incompatible answers. A tiny minority centered around the radical reformer Kang Youwei 康有为 answered that indeed it was, in a European sense, a religion and further called for the establishment of a Confucian national church. The majority of intellectuals, however, resurrected the original Jesuit argument that Confucianism was not religious in that sense. They argued – especially when addressing foreign audiences – that China never had true religions and that Confucianism was merely a system of ethics. China had only "superstitions" embodied in popular religions. Perhaps influenced by China's modern intellectuals, several generations of Sinophile foreigners, scholars, and even Christian missionaries took up this position, making it a standard part of the foreign academic understanding of Chinese civilization. In recent years the religious elements in Confucianism have come to the forefront in academia. Within China itself, however, "Confucianism as religion" seems to be more limited.

In the past decade, Kang Xiaoguang (康晓光) and others have resurrected a modified version of the Kang Youwei position of a century ago. In his 2003 article, "An Outline for the Cultural Nationalism" (文化民族主义纲论), Kang called outright for the establishment of a National Confucian Church and Confucian content education to be taught throughout the educational system. Since then, the state has made certain moves along these lines. A vigorous public debate broke out in early 2010 on the nature of "national studies" in which the tide seems to be flowing toward the creation of an academic discipline of that name. In the autumn of 2014, president Xi Jinping himself spoke about the importance of classical texts in the educational curriculum. As in traditional China, classical learning is again posited as the basis of traditional virtue. Recitation of the classics, again an activity with a spiritual dimension, has also been promoted. There is even a popular concept of a virtuous Confucian entrepreneur (*Ru shang* 儒商) that seems to carry a certain religious gloss.

1.5 Confucianism and Government

A theme that underlies both our major questions is the relationship between nationalism and neo-traditionalism. Nonparty New Confucian intellectuals, the mainstay of the recent cultural revival, are clearly cultural nationalists whose major concern is to recreate China's unique position among world cultures by synthesizing traditional and modern into a new and potent cultural force. The broad Chinese public, no matter what their opinions might be on the academy or the Party, usually view Confucianism through nationalist lenses. Although the New Confucians' vision of China is clearly at odds with Marxism and the party state as presently constituted, a large number of "Marxist Confucians" make common cause with the New Confucians in certain areas. They suggest that more "Confucian" elements should be integrated into Marxism and even that a Confucian socialism might be constructed on that basis. They see that there are elements in a Confucian revival that could benefit the party state and, perhaps ironically, increase its legitimacy. The state itself has taken an ambiguous position toward a Confucian revival but has provided resources and discursive space for its growth.

Would the future of Confucianism be a typically Chinese eclectic mixture of various elements? To take Liang Shuming again as an example, he accepted the title of "Last Confucian" but was also devoutly Buddhist. He considered himself a Marxist and also had great respect for folk Daoism. His last book was an eclectic mixture of his Confucian/Buddhist past and Marxism. Signs of official support for Confucianism have increased markedly in the past 6 years. Recently, President Xi Jinping has spoken favorably and unambiguously about Confucianism and traditional culture. Is it possible that in the future the state will endorse a form of eclectic Confucianism?

1.6 Confucianism and the Natural Environment

The twenty-first century world environment is vastly different from that of 60 years ago. In response to the challenge of China's rural poverty and backwardness, Liang's rural reconstruction goals were modernization, technological diffusion, and economic growth through moral renewal. The present century's biggest challenge, for China and the rest of the world, however, is ecological. As Weiming Tu perceptively observed some time ago, New Confucian Humanism has had an "ecological turn." The two essays by Guo Qiyong and Sheri Liao directly address this question. Guo's essay examines the "ecological philosophy" embedded in China's ancient classical texts. Liao's describes an actual working plan that is based on the ideas in those ancient classical texts.

What, then, is the Confucianism of the future? A central question for the future is will it remain an academic exercise or will it be reconstituted as a social and political force?

This volume is divided into three sections: Theory, Practice, and Joining of Theory and Practice.

The first essay is by John Makeham of Australian National University, who qualifies as the world authority on New Confucianism. A decade ago, non-Chinese scholars, even specialists in Chinese studies, had little understanding of it. Makeham has succeeded in presenting New Confucianism in all of its dimensions through several important books. His encyclopedic knowledge of this field and his original, creative interpretations have placed him in the forefront of the study of New Confucianism. Insisting on "nativist epistemology," Makeham refers to Confucianism as "*Ruxue* 儒学" and concludes, as he has argued extensively elsewhere, that it has lost its "soul"; New Confucianism has been a scholastic exercise confined to the academy rather than a real social or political power in practice. Makeham points out that the internal cleavage of knowledge (*zhi* 知) and moral action (*xing* 行) jeopardizes the New Confucian enterprise. Confucianism has become a rationalist philosophical discourse along Western lines, and real-world self-cultivation and moral practice have been ignored. He also points out the dangers of official government support of *Ruxue*, as evidenced in the case of Taiwan in the 1960s through the 1980s. Makeham has pointed out that to this day, the Chinese government in Beijing has not explicitly endorsed *Ruxue*.

Tze-ki Hon's contribution focuses upon the New Confucian research project headed by Fang Keli, and funded by the Chinese government. This project, Hon claims, has brought Confucianism back to mainland China after a 30-year absence. In his analysis, Hon emphasizes the limits of Fang's research project. He also discusses how Confucianism has been used as a support for nationalism.

Guo Qiyong and Cui Tao demonstrate in some detail how deeply ecological principles are rooted in the thought of Chinas classical period. Primarily built upon the Confucian concept of "Heaven and Earth," which includes the entire cosmos, including humanity and human society, they emphasize that classical Confucian notions resemble closely the environmental ethics of today.

The second section of the book, Contemporary Confucian Practice, has two articles. In the past two decades, there have been hints of government support for propagating Confucian values throughout society but no unambiguous signs of positive support. The only concrete propagation activities have been the movement to promote student memorization and recitation of classical texts. Some, such as Confucian "Fundamentalist" Jiang Qing, have indeed advocated this activity and put it into practice. Many different institutions throughout China have, but only on a small scale.

Liao Xiaoyi's article outlines her own successful program of "green" rural reconstruction. Founder and president of Global Village of Beijing, she has been a prominent ecological activist for almost two decades. The Clinton Global Initiative program gave her their "Global Citizen" award. She has based her ecological thought on those discussed by Guo and Cui. A follower of Liang Shuming, Liao considers her rural work the heir to Liang Shuming's rural reconstruction movement, as it is also a mass social movement that the government supports but does not run. Recently, the scope of her sites has increased and has had increasing government backing.

Liao's program does include recitation of the classics and some revival of traditional ritual (i.e., *li* 礼, a Protean term that refers to both formal etiquette/ritual and the rules of social propriety). Generally speaking, attempts to restore Confucian ritual have been quite rare. For example, most wedding rituals practiced by the young urban middle class have been in the Western style. Hoyt Tillman and his daughter Margaret Tillman present a specific case study of a "modernized" wedding ceremony based on Zhu Xi's *Family Rituals* (*Zhuzi jia li* 朱子家礼). Zhu Jiaoren, a 29th-generation descendant of Zhu Xi, has set himself to modernizing traditional ritual, and his first experiment was the wedding ritual of his son in 2009. The Tillman essay explains Zhu's nuptial rites and highlights the impact of economic, aesthetic, and government policy issues.

The third section – on Liang Shuming – shows how he, alone among the New Confucians, joined the realms of theory and practice.

My essay presents a brief biographical sketch of Liang that emphasizes how his life is a unique combination of profound thought and vigorous action based upon that thought.

The next two essays explore those two sides of Liang, his religious thought and his political theory of democracy. Thierry Meynard describes Liang's personal religion as a quest for absolute transcendence, but he (Liang) realized that most human beings at the present state of development were not ready for such a religion. Confucianism as a social and moral force independent of the state had the capacity, however, to function as a religion and provide spiritual solace for the individual. Meynard concludes that Liang's Confucian "religion that was not a religion" might well serve the world's present need for a common ethos and ethic.

Gu Hongliang argues that Liang Shuming did have a theory of Confucian democracy, which in turn bears certain resemblances to John Dewey's ideals of democracy. Liang's theory of democracy, not surprisingly, emphasizes responsibility and calls upon people to follow the "virtuous" (the moral elite) as well as community customs and uses.

In the final essay, Liang's son, Liang Peishu, presents what he considers Liang Shuming's major advice for the contemporary world: humanity must know itself! On the one hand, humanity understands more and controls more of the physical world; on the other, it seems impotent to control itself and so has created many disasters. Humans now command an unprecedented amount of power over the physical world and from the physical world, yet it seems unable to stop itself from continuing to create an unprecedented ecological disaster.

Part I
Confucianism in the Contemporary World of Thought

Chapter 2
Some Historical and Methodological Reflections on *Ruxue* in Contemporary China

John Makeham

This paper sets out a series of reflections on *ruxue* in contemporary China. After first rehearsing some historical facts, I introduce a number of contemporary perspectives on the consequences of academic institutionalization and professionalization on *ruxue* over the past century, in particular on *ruxue* understood as philosophy. I then turn to the question of whether China's intervening philosophical legacies over this same period—Japanese, Indian, European, American, and so forth—can be bracketed and ignored and point out some of the implications that such legacies have for *ruxue* identity. The next section argues that the uncritical and unreflective manner in which many contemporary scholars employ the terms *rujia* and *rujiao* as analytical categories often thwarts a reliable purchase on historical realities. The concluding section warns of the deleterious consequences of the party state's becoming involved in the promotion of *ruxue* in mainland China, based on the lessons of Taiwan's experience.

Anthropologist Joël Thoraval has argued that in modern times the threat to *ruxue* comes not from some external source but from the internal cleavage of knowledge (知) and moral action (行), where the focus of intellectualized *ruxue* is ontology, not cultivation and practice. He maintains that unlike "Neo-Confucianism" which was a combination of cultivation and thought, contemporary New Confucianism has been reduced to a form of philosophical discourse. Whereas Neo-Confucian reflections on the classical scriptures were given various forms of expression—from religious ceremonial to quiet sitting and from social ceremonial and institutions to

J. Makeham (✉)
Australian National University, Canberra, ACT, Australia
e-mail: john.makeham@anu.edu.au

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd
and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*,
China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_2

art—New Confucianism[1] has been transformed on the model of Western philosophy (especially German idealism) and taken on a rationalist form of philosophical discourse (Du Ruile 杜瑞乐 (Joël Thoraval) 2003). Viewed from perspective *ruxue*'s intellectual history over the *longue durée*, the tension between scholarship and self-cultivation, might well be dismissed simply as a resurfacing of the old tension between "honoring the moral nature" (*zun dexing* 尊德性) and "following the path of inquiry and learning" (*dao wenxue* 道问学). Since Song times, these two styles of practice have been portrayed as alternating trends in the pursuit of the *rujia* way, sometimes viewed as complementary and at other times as antithetical. Over the past century, however, the relationship between them has been neither complementary nor antithetical. Instead, academic scholarship has flourished and self-cultivation has all but disappeared.[2]

2.1 Academic Institutionalization and *Ruxue*

Sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein describes the intellectual history of the nineteenth century as being "marked above all by [the] disciplinarization and professionalization of knowledge, that is to say, by the creation of permanent institutional structures designed both to produce new knowledge and to reproduce the producers of knowledge (Wallerstein et al. 1996)." In China, similar processes began to take shape in the decades after 1900, as Western disciplinary models gradually superseded traditional schemes of knowledge classification. In the case of the of the new academic discipline of Chinese philosophy, Western philosophy provided key conceptual paradigms, vocabulary and technical terms, bibliographic categories, and even histories and periodization schemes essential to the demarcation, definition, and narration of Chinese philosophy. This was not, however, a simple case of the blanket inscription of Western philosophy upon a Chinese *tabula rasa* nor was the process by which Western models of knowledge categorization became introduced into China a passive one in which the "foreign" was imposed on the "native." Rather, it was an ongoing process of negotiation and appropriation initiated and conducted by Chinese protagonists in which traditional categories of Chinese knowledge were "translated" into the new academic category of *zhexue* 哲学.

[1] In English, the term "New Confucian" is to be distinguished from "Neo-Confucian." New Confucianism is a modern neoconservative philosophical movement, with religious overtones. Proponents claim it to be the legitimate transmitter and representative of orthodox *ru* 儒 ("Confucian") values. The movement is promoted and/or researched by prominent Chinese intellectuals based in Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong of China, and the United States of America. Elsewhere I have argued that although most of the promoters and sympathetic interpreters of New Confucianism trace the movement to the early part of the twentieth century, in fact, there is little evidence that New Confucianism had attained a degree of integration or coalescence sufficient for it to be recognized and promoted as a distinct philosophical movement, or school of thought, before the 1970s.

[2] This, of course, is not to claim that scholarship on cultivation has come to an end.

2.2 Master Studies

By the late 1890s, the swelling tide of Western learning had hastened the demise of the authority of the Thirteen Classics and in so doing had also enabled new conditions conducive to the promotion of Masters Studies (诸子学). Thus, in the translation of traditional categories of Chinese knowledge to modern categories of disciplinary knowledge, the writings of the pre-Qin masters (*zhuzi* 诸子)[3] constituted the main corpus of texts that were reinscribed as the foundational texts of Chinese philosophy. This process culminated in the publication of Hu Shi's 胡适 (1891–1962) *Zhongguo zhexueshi dagang* 中国哲学史大纲 (An Outline of the History of Chinese Philosophy) in 1919, following his return to China in 1917 to take up a position in the Philosophy Department of Peking University to teach courses on the history of Chinese and Western philosophy. The revival of interest in Masters Studies in the late Qing provided an essential impetus in this process.

A key work promoting Masters Studies was Zhang Binglin's 章炳麟 (Taiyan 太炎) (1869–1936) *Qiushu* 訄书 (Writings to Prompt Action, 1900). *Qiushu* broke the traditional mold in which *ruxue* was accorded an elevated status, by treating the *ru* 儒 as just one school among many. In the "Xue bian" 学变 (Transformations in Learning) chapter, Zhang praised Wang Chong 王充 (27-ca. 100) for his criticisms of Confucius, and in the "Ding Kong" 订孔 (Evaluating Confucius) chapter,[4] he described how the teachings of Confucius and the *ru* were based on those of Laozi and presented Confucius as a mere scribe, as having an undeserved reputation and as being inconsistent in his doctrines. He also portrayed both Mencius and Xunzi as superior to Confucius. Indeed, already in 1897 Zhang had published "Hou sheng" 后圣 (Later Sage) in which he placed Xunzi on an equal footing with Confucius and claimed that for over 2,000 years the meaning of Xunzi's essays such as "Zheng ming" 正名 (On the Correct Use of Names) and "Li lun" 礼论 (Discourse on Ritual) had not been properly understood.[5]

More generally, as a consequence of this process whereby orthodoxy was deemed an anachronism, authority in texts became more equally shared among the significantly increased number of referees concerned. It was precisely this context that enabled Masters Studies to flourish in the first two decades of the twentieth century and gradually to be transformed into philosophy. This was largely as the expense of *ruxue*, and it was not until the 1930s that Neo-Confucian philosophy emerged as a notable philosophical presence.

For some, the institutionalization and professionalization of *ruxue* in the twentieth century are symptomatic of the epistemic violence that accompanies the

[3] This category includes such figures as *Laozi, Zhuangzi, Liezi, Han Feizi, Xunzi, Mengzi, Gongsun Longzi, Mozi, Guanzi*, and so forth.

[4] "Ding Kong" was completed in 1902 but not included in *Qiushu* until the 1904 edition.

[5] As contemporary scholar Wang Fansen 王泛森 points out that this essay was written in response to an anti-Xunzi movement in the late Qing initiated by a young Liang Qichao 梁启超 (1873–1929) (who at the time still aligned himself with New Text scholarship), Tan Sitong 谭嗣同 (1865–1898), and other New Text partisans. Wang Fansen (1985). See also Liang Qichao (1993/1921).

interrogation of traditional modes of Chinese thought through the deployment of Western concepts and paradigms. Jing Haifeng 景海峰 has decried the introduction of Western learning in the early part of the twentieth century as having led to a fundamental change in how people understood *ruxue*: "from the original inner identification with *ruxue* as a matter of personal esteem, to a situation in which it has become an object of external, objective description and research." He relates that the two processes of professionalization and institutionalization have led to *ruxue*'s being dismembered into various disciplinary specializations. At the beginning of the twentieth century, in the wake of the disintegration of classical studies and the dissemination of Western learning, people's understanding and evaluation of *ruxue* underwent a fundamental change: from the original inner identification with *ruxue* as a matter of personal esteem to a situation in which it has become an object of external, objective description and research. For Jing, the sacred nature of *ruxue* ceased to exist as it came to be an object for analysis and criticism.[6]

Some understand the development of *ruxue* in the post-May Fourth period to have been influenced by a trend to highlight the overall integrity—relative to the situation in the West—of Chinese philosophy and the "cultural spirit," which, in turn, fostered an ever-intensifying reinterpretation and systematization of *rujia* thought itself (Zheng Jiadong 郑家栋 2003). For these commentators, this systematization was inimical to the nature and spirit of traditional *ruxue*—a philosophy that points the way for people to verify its teachings in real-life situations rather than relying on theory and rigorous logic.

As the process of knowledge compartmentalization, systematization, and epistemological reordering intensified over the course of the twentieth century in China, correspondingly pressure was brought to distinguish between "the philosophical" and "the religious" when in fact many scholars held that such a distinction is inappropriate in the case of "the tradition of the *rujia*." (This distinction can be traced to the early part of the twentieth century in debates about whether Confucius was a religious specialist [*zongjiaojia* 宗教家] or a philosopher [*zhexueji*a 哲学家] (Kojima Tsuyoshi 小岛毅 2000).) Thus the lack of consensus among many contemporary Chinese academics concerning whether a religious dimension should be ascribed to *rujiao* and/or *ruxue* highlights a tension created, on the hand, by the need for scholars to use these terms in a manner congruent with broader contemporary usage (viz., *ruxue*, the philosophical; *rujiao*, the religious), while, on the other hand, many of these scholars harbor profound misgivings about the viability of a sharp philosophical/religious distinction as applied to *ruxue*/*rujiao*/the *rujia* tradition.

Curiously, it is the now disgraced Zheng Jiadong, who, for all his criticisms of the intellectualization, institutionalization, and professionalization of *ruxue* in the

[6] Jing Haifeng 景海峰 (2004). The writings he refers to here are Zhang Bingling's influential essay "Yuan Ru" 原儒 (Tracing the *Ru* to their Source, 1909); Hu Shi's "Shuo Ru" 说儒 (Interpreting *Ru*, 1935); Feng Youlan's 冯友兰 (1895–1991) "Yuan Ru Mo" (Tracing the *Ru* and the *Mo* to Their Source 原儒墨, 1935); and Guo Moruo's 郭沫若 (1892–1986) "Bo 'Shuo Ru'" 驳"说儒" (A Refutation of "Interpreting *Ru*," 1937).

twentieth century, has proposed one solution to the seeming impasse imposed by the "scholarship versus cultivation" dichotomy: "For Xiong [Shili], Mou [Zongsan], and the others, writing was itself a form of cultivation, and could even be said to have been an aesthetic practice…. In their straitened circumstances, writing had become a kind of bitter struggle, a fundamental method for pursuing their ideals (Zheng Jiadong 1997)." Although Zheng's solution to the "scholarship versus cultivation" dichotomy is creative, there is some question as to how accurately it represents Xiong Shili 熊十力 (1885–1968), at least. In his critique of Yogācāra (瑜伽) Buddhist philosophy, Xiong often targeted views he attributed to Dharmapāla (护法) (sixth century). For example, in arguing that Dharmapāla had invested karmic seeds (种子) with self-nature, Xiong concluded his critique by describing how a correct perspective on fundamental reality is to be achieved:

> If one understands that the phenomenal world in fact does not exist then one knows that there is no means for causes as conditions to be established. It is only because the phenomenal world to which false discriminations are attached is empty, that inherent Reality which is not empty is able to be profoundly realized by means of proper focused attention. "Inherent" means "inherently so of itself" because it is not established by ideation. "Reality" is an alternative name for Fundamental State/Condition. "Focused attention" (作意) means "detailed reflection through accurate cognition" (观照). Detailed reflection through accurate cognition of the wisdom that perceives reality as-it-is tallies with truth, and is far removed from deluded frivolous discourse, hence it is said: "proper focused attention (Xiong Shili 2001)."

Although Xiong's various critiques of Dharmapāla are based on rigorous argument and rational critique, the above references to "focused attention" (作意) and "detailed reflection through accurate cognition" (观照) make it abundantly clear that Xiong regarded non-conceptual insight to be a key practice in self-cultivation, with the implication being that this insight was based on his own personal experience.

Yet still others argue that historical distance means that the true nature of *ruxue* philosophy can never be recaptured. Hu Yong 胡庸, for example, claims that *ruxue* has come to an end because

> the entire body of categories used in classical Chinese philosophy is no longer able to represent the thought of modern-day, *Hanyu* speaking philosophers. The central categories of *ruxue*—humaneness, rightness, ritual propriety, doing one's best for others, empathy, filial piety—are no longer the conceptual tools of modern philosophizing…. This system of philosophy [*ruxue*], its unique conceptual system, and its styles of thinking and expression have only an historical existence and are inevitably transformed when they are merged into the lives of modern people…. The language of traditional philosophy is now merely an object for philosophical reflection and not the means by which this philosophical reflection is undertaken. The relationship between traditional philosophers and modern philosophers is merely a historical relationship (Hu Yong 胡庸 2007).

While not jumping to the same rash conclusions, Nicolas Standaert has made a related observation: "When one talks about philosophy in China today, even about Chinese philosophy, one uses a language that is based on the Chinese adoption of Western philosophical terms." Standaert's comment is made in the context of discussing the Jesuit adoption of Neo-Confucian terms and concepts to discuss

Aristotelian philosophy in seventeenth-century China. The situation thus provides a stark contrast to the one he describes for today: "The choice of the Jesuits and their collaborators to use common Chinese terms had as a result that Aristotelian philosophy was explained in (Neo-) Confucian terms, as is clear from the different branches in ethics *xiushen* [修身], *keji* [克己], etc. As such, the Chinese philosophical system prevailed over the Western system…. In the first encounter between China and the West…Westerners were predominantly compelled to talk about their own tradition in Chinese (Neo-Confucian) terms (Nicolas Standaert 2000)."

In an important recent essay, Kwong-loi Shun has drawn attention to the consequences of the modern default practice of using Western concepts and frameworks for doing comparative work between Chinese and Western philosophies, noting that "while we see frequent deployment of Western philosophical frameworks in the study of Chinese thought, we rarely encounter the reverse phenomenon, namely, the deployment of Chinese philosophical frameworks in the study of Western thought." And while acknowledging that the use of Western philosophical concepts can help highlight certain features of Confucian thought related to ethical issues, Shun further insists that "Chinese ethical traditions themselves have rich insights into the ethical experiences of human beings that are conveyed through concepts distinctive of these traditions. Viewing Chinese thought from the perspective of Western philosophical conceptions will not do full justice to these insights (Shun Kwong-loi 2009)."

Indeed, even the neologism for philosophy, "哲学," has historically embedded normative connotations that are independent of meanings associated with modern Western notions of "philosophy."[7] As a contraction of 希哲学, which, in turn, was

[7] By the same token, we should not ignore the important creative function that local context plays in the naturalization of foreign concepts. In his discussion of the introduction of the Western notion of logic in China, Joachim Kurtz writes:

> Modern Chinese discourses, no matter whether on social or ideological questions or on China's intellectual and cultural heritage, are articulated to a large extent in terms that were coined and normalized as translations of Western or Western-derived notions. Yet far from serving as simple equivalents of imported ways of understanding, many terms of foreign origin have unfolded a life very much of their own in modern Chinese contexts. More often than not they have acquired new meanings that creatively alter, extend or even undermine established European conceptions.

See Joachim Kurtz (2001). Christoph Harbsmeier also remarks:

> I believe that the agenda of modernisation in China is set by Westernisation mainly from the 19th century onwards. But what needs careful detailed attention is the persevering constitutive interference of pre-modern traditional Chinese conceptual modes in the creative process of the Chinese appropriation of new Western conceptual content, and the way in which concepts of Western origin get to live very much their own independent lives in the varied and evolving modern Chinese cultural contexts.

By "own independent lives," I take Harbsmeier to be referring to these concepts no longer being determined by their original meanings. See Christoph Harbsmeier, "Concepts That Make Multiple Modernities: The Conceptual Modernisation of China in a Historical and Critical Perspective,"

inspired by Zhou Dunyi's 周敦颐 (1017–1073) notion of 希贤 "to emulate worthies,"[8] implicit in the concept of *zhexue* when applied to Chinese contexts are such notions as the authority invested in sages and sage-like historical figures; the normative power accorded models (human—and by correlative association, natural and cosmological); and the conviction that reading certain texts bequeathed by former sagely men affords unmediated encounters with the transformative personalities of these exceptional historical figures, the ultimate expression of which is to be "inwardly wise/sagely and outwardly kingly" (内圣外王). As the academic stocks of *ruxue* have grown in value over the past three decades, the culturally embedded connotations of the term *zhexue* have taken on renewed significance.

Shun's highlighting of insights into the ethical experiences of human beings conveyed by Chinese philosophical concepts presents academic practitioners of *ruxue* with an important challenge. That is, if one's goal is to move beyond a purely historical inquiry, then greater effort will need to be applied to showing how these insights into the ethical or other experiences of Chinese people in the past have a contemporary relevance that extends beyond mere cultural pride in the legacies of the past. How might this be achieved? One approach widely adopted by intellectual historians over the past two decades has been to focus on the continued agency of China's past in China's present. Yet, can China's intervening philosophical legacies of the immediate past—Japanese, Indian, European, American, and so forth—be bracketed and ignored? Do these legacies not also serve to transform the past?[9] Moreover, are not contemporary Chinese conceptions of just what is "philosophical" inevitably shaped by this more immediate philosophical legacy? If the answer to these questions is in the affirmative, then this would seem to complicate the claim that "It is by studying Chinese ethical thought on its own terms that we can bring out its more distinctive ideas, which can then be fleshed out and developed without being shaped by agendas set by Western philosophical discussions."[10]

---

unpublished paper at http://www.hf.uio.no/ikos/forskning/forskningsprosjekter/harbsmeier/concepts.pdf, accessed January 20, 2010.

[8] Saito Tsuyoshi 斎藤毅 (1977) shows that in lecture notes dating from 1862, Nishi Amane 西周 (1829–1897) had already translated "philosophy" as 希哲学. Saito further notes (p. 341) that in his 1873 manuscript *Seisei Hatsu'un* 生性发蕴 (On the Relation of the Physical and Spiritual), Nishi explained that the term "philosophy" derives from the Greek *philos* "to love" and *sophos* "wise" and concluded that the learning or science of philosophy means to love the wise. Nishi further related that the meaning is compatible with Zhou Dunyi's notion of 希贤 "to emulate worthies." In the "To Fix One's Mind on Learning" ("Zhi Xue" 志学) chapter of his *Penetrating the Book of Change* ("Tong Shu" 通书), Zhou Dunyi 周敦颐 (1017–1073) wrote: "Sages emulate heaven, worthies emulate sages, and men of learning and social standing emulate worthies."

[9] In this connection it is also worth noting Shun's notion of "articulation" which refers to the process by which one seeks to extract from texts insights of relevance to us. Not only does "articulation [ground] philosophical construction by providing the core ideas on which to build a philosophical account…. there is also a sense in which … *philosophical construction anchors articulation* [JM's emphasis]." I would suggest that the grounding provided by the philosophical legacies of the immediate past also needs to be acknowledged. Shun Kwong-loi (2009).

[10] Shun Kwong-loi, "Studying Confucian and Comparative Ethics," pp. 456–457, 476.

2.3 Whose Confucianism? Which Confucianism?

Since the 1980s, Taiwan and mainland China have witnessed the most sustained resurgence of academic and intellectual interest in *ruxue* of the past century. In the discourse that has emerged, *ruxue* is variously conceived as a form of culture, an ideology, and a tradition of morally normative and even religious values. By the mid-1990s, on the mainland this revival was sometimes referred to as a period of "*ruxue* fever," just as "culture fever" had burned a decade before. This discourse has led to the proliferation of contending conceptions of the historical form and function of *ruxue* (and *rujiao*, "*rujia* thought," and "*rujia* culture"), as well as proposals to rejuvenate *ruxue* in order to make it a vital cultural and psycho-spiritual (*jingshen*) resource in the modern world.

Liu Shuxian 刘述先 has distinguished three types of *ruxue*: spiritual *ruxue* (Confucius, Mencius, the Cheng brothers, Zhu Xi, Lu Xiangshan, Wang Yangming), politicized *ruxue* (an ideological tradition that served the interests of the court), and vulgar *ruxue* (beliefs and practices popular at the "grass-roots" level of society that also incorporated elements of *daojia* thought and Buddhism and superstitious beliefs in ghosts and spirits) (Liu Shuxian 1997). In contrast to Liu's somewhat dismissive attitude to vulgar *ruxue*, Yu Yingshi 余英时 recalls that as a boy in his native Anhui Province village where he lived between 1937 and 1946, "although *rujia* culture was in a degenerate state, it nevertheless controlled the activities of daily life: by and large, all interpersonal relationships—from marriage and funeral customs to seasonal festivals—adhered to the *rujia* norms, supplemented by Buddhist and Daoist beliefs and practices." He describes how, at the time, like everyone else; he was "an internal participant in *rujia* culture." This all changed after 1949, however, such that today on the mainland those below middle age have had no experience as internal participants in *rujia* culture. Moreover, he continues, even in places like Taiwan, since the 1950s, *ruxue* learned from books has been far more dominant than *rujia* values encountered in everyday living, a situation that has "decisively influenced" contemporary discussions of *ruxue*.

For Yu Yingshi, discourse on *ruxue* is little more than an empty talk because it is devoid of practice/praxis (实践). In comparing the "fundamental difference" between contemporary Chinese discussions of *ruxue* and discussions from the turn of the twentieth century until the May Fourth period, Yu concludes that contemporary discussions lack any personal, lived experience of *rujia* culture. Instead, the emphasis is placed on trying to determine just what type of religion or philosophy *ruxue* is meant to be or on trying to reconstruct the value-orientation dimension of *ruxue*. He particularly laments that *ruxue* no longer has a relevance in the everyday lives of ordinary people. It has become a discourse and is no longer lived and experienced in the course of a person's life on the mainland or even in Taiwan.[11]

[11] Yu Yingshi (1998). A version of this book, with fewer chapters, was published under the same title by Global Publishing (River Edge, NJ) in 1996.

For Yu Yingshi, *rujia* values are to be realized in the context of inter-human relations in the course of everyday life, and "they cannot be restricted merely to a set of academic moral doctrines or religious philosophy."[12] For the past several decades, he complains, discussions have concentrated on those aspects of *ruxue* that concern a transcendent realm. Increasingly, this led scholars to focus their attention on abstract, philosophical issues, and on the writings of prominent Western philosophers such as Plato, Kant, Hegel, Bergson, Whitehead, and Heidegger. One immediate consequence of this one-sided focus of attention, he complains, is that those aspects of *ruxue* that concern the mundane world (society, politics, the economy, and ethics) have been overlooked.[13] His various studies on the relation between *rujia* ethics and "the mercantile spirit," his research on Qing dynasty classical scholarship, and his more recent volumes on Zhu Xi[14] can be understood as attempts to redress this perceived imbalance.[15]

Li Zehou 李泽厚 has also consistently stressed that *ruxue* cannot be reduced to a tradition associated with self-cultivation and "inner sageliness" and represented merely by a handful of figures such as Confucius, Mencius, the Cheng brothers, Zhu Xi, Lu Xiangshan, and Wang Yangming. Taking a related yet different tack from that of Yu Yingshi, Li insists that *ruxue* also includes a long and rich tradition of "external kingliness" concerned with statecraft and practical issues associated with such figures as Confucius, Xunzi, Dong Zhongshu, Wang Tong, Chen Liang, Ye Shi, Gu Yanwu, and Huang Zongxi. He attaches particular importance to the formative influence that Xunzi, Dong Zhongshu, and Han dynasty *ru* exercised on Chinese culture (Li Zehou 1998).

Gan Chunsong 干春松 has developed this perspective to argue that, historically, the *rujia* should be understood as an institution rather than as a representative of a particular philosophy, religion, or abstract ideology. He maintains that the *rujia*'s institutional mode of existence has long been overlooked by mainland scholars and proposes two explanations for this. First, China is a "weak culture" and its institutions have been "comprehensively Westernized." Because many aspects of the *rujia* are difficult to reconcile with democracy, this has prompted scholarly efforts to "harmonize *rujia* [values] with democratic institutions, and so overlook the institutional dimensions of the *rujia*." Second, the adoption of modern disciplinary categories has meant that the *rujia*'s complex existence has been broken down into

[12] Yu Yingshi, *Xiandai ruxue lun*, preface, 5.

[13] Yu Yingshi, *Xiandai ruxue lun*, preface, 8

[14] Yu Yingshi (2003). For a critical response to Yu's challenge to the "legitimacy" of studying aspects of so-called *daoxue* and *lixue* thought as philosophy, see the Introduction to John Makeham (2010).

[15] This "historian's" perspective is, of course, not new. 70 years ago, Chen Yinke 陈寅恪 wrote: "There is a connection between [civil and penal] codes and all public and private political and social acts. These codes are where the doctrines of the *rujia* are given concrete expression. Hence for the past two thousand years, it has actually been in the areas of institutions, laws, and public and private life that the Hua-Xia nation has been most profoundly influenced by *rujia* doctrines." See Chen's evaluation (*shenchao baogao san* 审查报告三) appended to Feng Youlan's *Zhongguo zhexueshi* (1934).

specific disciplines such as philosophy, history, sociology, and so on. This has meant that the institutional mode of the whole has tended to be ignored.[16] Still other commentators have complained of the "aristocratization" (*guizuhua* 贵族化) of *ruxue*, championing instead "secularized" (*shishuhua* 世俗化), "commoner-ized" (*pingminhua* 平民化) *ruxue*, and "real-life *ruxue*" (*shenghuohua de ruxue* 生活化的儒学).

Contemporary Chinese commentators have tended to present *ruxue* either as a monolithic tradition or as a composite entity composed of discrete elements. Those who adopt the monolithic conception tend to do so unreflectively. It is, however, the view of *ruxue* as a composite entity composed of discrete elements that informs most academic discussions of *ruxue* and *rujia* thought. Accordingly, the literature has generated a welter of terms to distinguish different conceptions of *ruxue*, including classical, official, unofficial, popular, political, secular, aristocratic, institutional, spiritual, social, imperial, deep structure, critical, real life, New, post New, New New, and so forth. There is limited consensus in contemporary Chinese academic discourse about how *rujiao*, *ruxue*, and *rujia* tradition should be distinguished. These terms effectively function as "floating signifiers"[17] whose meanings are vulnerable to subjective interpretation and hence continue to be open to negotiation. Moreover, the uncritical and unreflective manner in which many contemporary scholars employ the terms *rujia* and *rujiao* as analytical categories often thwarts a reliable purchase on historical realities. Too often these accounts tend to be unconsciously prescriptive rather than descriptive or speculative rather than being based on what is verifiable.

2.4 State Versus Cultivation

Although it is an untenable proposition that the promotion of *ruxue* in contemporary mainland China is orchestrated by the party state and its functionaries, this does not mean that the state has had no involvement, as evidenced by official endorsements of *ruxue* as an important constitutive element in "China's traditional culture." And precisely because *ruxue* exists today in China more as a "floating signifier," as David Ownby has recently pointed out, "Chinese authorities can embrace and exploit elements of the revival that are useful for [their] own search for legitimacy

[16] Gan Chunsong (2003). He does, however, undermine these claims to some extent on p. 2 where he claims that already in Song times the *rujia* had been transformed into "a type of conceptualized school of thought" in which cultivation of the mind and the nature became central to *rujia* identity. In support of this account of the change in *rujia* identity, Gan cites Qian Mu's 钱穆 observation that up until the time of Han Yu 韩愈 (768–824), the collective term "Zhou Kong 周孔" (the Duke of Zhou and Confucius) was common, but from the time of the Cheng brothers, the collective term "Kong Meng 孔孟" displaced it. Qian characterizes this new orientation as having focused exclusively on "the sagely way" rather than the "kingly way."

[17] See my summary discussion in *Lost Soul: "Confucianism" in Contemporary Chinese Academic Discourse*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008, p. 310.

by selectively re-appropriating certain aspects of China's traditional cultural heritage, thus creating the impression that they are making common cause with the Confucian enthusiasts among the broader population (David Ownby 2009)."

Should the party state in China continue to be involved in promoting Confucianism? I believe that this would have deleterious consequences. Recent history confirms that even promoters of *ruxue* can all too readily become apologists for the state's appropriation of *ruxue* for authoritarian ends. In the inaugural issue of the "neo-traditionalist" journal *Yuandao*, the journal's founder and editor, Chen Ming 陈明 (writing under the penname Cheng Zhi 澄之), published an essay that outlined a revisionist account of Taiwan's Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement (中国文化复兴运动) in which he promoted a vision of how the *daotong* 道统 and the *zhengtong* 政统 might be harmoniously combined in a modern society.[18] Chen also expressed a willingness to endorse the "rationality" of "new authoritarianism" in the expectation that this would deliver party state patronage for the revival of *ruxue* in China sufficient for it to attain a level of institutional legitimacy. The essay is remarkable for its positive evaluation of Taiwan's Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement in the 1960s and 1970s—an evaluation that contrasts sharply with the evaluations of prominent contemporary Taiwanese-Chinese *ruxue* revivalists.

Chen's willingness to endorse "new authoritarianism" in order to secure some sort of political patronage for *ruxue* is, if nothing else, a pragmatic move. It is also consistent with the promotion of *ruxue* by party apparatchiks as part of a "united front" strategy directed at enforcing the One China principle. Consider the following passage from the mainland journal *Taiwan yanjiu* (Taiwan Studies) published a year after Chen Ming's essay:

> The Chinese (*Zhonghua*) nation is a nation with a long and excellent tradition of historical culture. *Ruxue* represents the spiritual wealth of the Chinese nation. Historically it is rooted in the Chinese nation and is the cultural foundation connecting both sides of the Strait. Party Secretary Jiang Zemin pointed out: Chinese culture "has always been the spiritual bond that holds together all the Chinese people"; "it is a key foundation in the realization of peaceful unification"; "compatriots on both sides of the Strait must join together to carry forward and promote the excellent tradition of Chinese culture." These far-sighted and insightful propositions have been sympathetically received on both sides of the Strait. Chinese culture is the bond connecting compatriots on both sides of the Strait and *ruxue* is the key foundation of culture on both sides of the Straight. Only a joint effort to carry forward and promote the excellent cultural tradition of the Chinese nation—of which *ruxue* is the core—will assist in enhancing a fundamental consensus on both sides of Strait and in promoting the important task of peaceful unification of both sides of the Strait (Lou Jie 娄杰 1997).

Chen Ming's essay is remarkable, first and most obviously, because of its glowing evaluation of Taiwan's Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement—an evaluation that contrasts sharply with the criticisms of prominent contemporary Taiwanese *ruxue* revivalists. Second, the essay represents one of the earliest attempts by a

[18] Cheng Zhi, "Zhengzhi yu jingji: Yi wenhua wei qizhi—Taiwan 'Zhonghua wenhua fuxing yundong 政治与经济:以文化为旗帜——台湾 '中华文化复兴运动'述评" (An Account of Taiwan's "Chinese Culture Renaissance Movement") *Yuandao* (1994.1), online version http://www.yuandao.com/zazhi/1ji/zzyjjywhwqz.html, accessed 14 April 2004.

mainland *ruxue* revivalist to argue on pragmatic grounds that it was in the interest of *ruxue*—and, of course, in the interest of those who sort to represent *ruxue*—to be aligned with the party state. In more recent times, this same message has been promoted by the likes of Kang Xiaoguang and Jiang Qing who call for the establishment of Confucianism as a state religion.[19]

Reflecting on Taiwan's historical experience, in which *ruxue* was conscripted by the Guomindang for political purposes, provides lessons which are just as relevant today in the case of mainland China. Taiwanese scholar Huang Junjie 黄俊杰 has identified three vehicles by which official *ruxue*[20] was propagated in Taiwan from the 1960s to the 1980s: the activities of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement Council, primary and secondary textbooks, and the publishing activities of semi-government organizations.[21] Huang sums up his criticisms of official *ruxue* as follows:

> In the official education system of post-war Taiwan, *ruxue* played the role of "supporter of state political ends." Accordingly, to a certain degree it became a tool and lost its subjectivity. In other words, in the historical situation of post-war Taiwan, *ruxue* thought was not valued and promoted for the sake of the *ruxue* thought system itself, but rather for the sake of other forces external to *ruxue* (for example, political ends, economic development, or social harmony, etc.). Because of this, *ruxue* gradually became divorced from itself, becoming a means by which to achieve goals external to *ruxue*… In order to render *ruxue* thought fully into a tool to serve "state political ends" the authorities subjected the rich content of *ruxue* thought to a high level of selective interpretation.[22]

These comments—made nearly two decades ago—are not without significance today.[23]

References

Du Ruile 杜瑞乐 (Joël Thoraval), "Rujia jingyan yu zhexue huayu: dui dangdai xin ruxue zhu yi'nan de fansi" 儒家经验与哲学话语: 对当代新儒学诸疑难的反思 (The *Rujia* Experience and Philosophical Discourse: Reflections on Various Difficulties Facing the New Confucians), *Zhongguo xueshu* 4, no. 2 (2003): p. 10

[19] Chen Ming also called for the establishment of *rujiao* as a civil religion. See his "Rujiao gongmin zongjiao shuo" 儒教劄民宗教说 (Confucianism as a Civil Religion), www.pinghesy.com/data/2007/1016/article_1594.htm, accessed 2 April 2010.

[20] He describes official *ruxue* as having functioned largely as a state-controlled ideological apparatus promulgated institutionally through primary and secondary textbooks, university entrance examinations, and civil service entry examinations.

[21] Huang Junjie (2001); Chün-chieh Huang (=Huang Junjie) (1992); *Taiwan yishi yu Taiwan wenhua* (2000).

[22] Huang Junjie, *Ruxue yu xiandai Taiwan*, pp. 286–287.

[23] A version of this paper was presented as a keynote address at the conference "Confucianism: Scholarship, Faith, and Self-Cultivation" in 25–27 May, 2010, at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Immanuel Wallerstein et al., *Open the Social Sciences: Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996, p. 7.

Zheng Jiadong 郑家栋, *Duanliezhong de chuantong*: *Xinnian yu lixing zhi jian* 断裂中的传统: 信念与理性之间 (A Tradition in Fragmentation: Between Faith and Reason), Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2003 (2001), pp. 154, 155.

Kojima Tsuyoshi 小岛毅, "Rujiao yu ruxue hanyi yitong chongtan: xin rujia de guancha" 儒教与儒学涵义异同重探: 新儒家的观察 (On the Different Connotations of the Terms *Rujiao* and *Ruxue* Once Again: Investigating the New Confucians), in Liu Shuxian 刘述先, ed., *Rujia sixiang zai xiandai DongYa: Zhongguo dalu yu Taiwan pian* 儒家思想在现代东亚: 中国大陆与台湾篇 (*Rujia* Thought in Modern East Asia: Mainland China and Taiwan). Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan, Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiusuo choubeichu, 2000, pp. 206–207.

Zheng Jiadong, "Gudu, shuli, xuanzhi: Mou Zongsan yu dangdai rujia de jingyu 孤独, 疏离,悬置: 牟宗三与当代新儒家的境遇 (Solitariness, Alienation, and Being Placed in Suspension: The Circumstances of Mou Zongsan and the New Confucians), in Li Minghui 李明辉 (ed.), *Rujia sixiang de xiandai quanshi* 儒家思想的现代诠释 (Modern Interpretations of *Rujia* Thought), Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiusuo choubeichu, 1997, p. 171.

Xiong Shili, *Xin wei shi lun* 新唯识论 (New Treatise on Nothing But Consciousness), literary text version (1932), in *Xiong Shili quanji* 熊十力全集 (Complete Writings of Xiong Shili), Vol. 1, Wuhan: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001, p. 54.

Hu Yong 胡庸, "*Ruxue* de zhongjie" 儒学的终结 (The End of *Ruxue*), *Xuehai* (Nanjing), 3(1997): pp. 55, 56.

Nicolas Standaert, "The Classification of Sciences and the Jesuit Mission in Late Ming China," in *Linked Faiths: Essays on Chinese Religions and Traditional Culture in Honour of Kristofer Schipper*, edited by Jan A. M. de Meyer and Peter M. Engelfret, Leiden: Brill, 2000, p. 293.

Liu Shuxian (ed.), *Rujia sixiang yu xiandai shijie* 儒家思想与现代世界 (Rujia Thought and the Modern World), Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan, Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiusuo. choubeichu, 1997, preface, 1.

Li Zehou "He wei 'xiandai xin ruxue'" 何谓"现代新儒学?" (What is Meant by "New Confucianism"?), in *Shiji xin meng* 世纪新梦 (New Dreams of the Century), Hefei: Anhui wenyi chubanshe, 1998, p. 111.

David Ownby, "Kang Xiaoguang: Social Science, Civil Society, Confucian Religion," *China Perspectives*, (2009.4): p. 101.

Lou Jie 娄杰, "Ruxue yu haixia liang'an de wenhua genji 儒学与海峡两岸的文化根基" (*Ruxue* and the Cultural Foundation of the Both Sides of the Strait), *Taiwan yanjiu*, (1997.1): pp. 78, 83.

Wang Fansen, *Zhang Taiyan de sixiang ji qi dui ruxue chuantong de chongji* 章太炎的思想及其对儒学传统的冲击 (Zhang Taiyan's Thought and its Assault on the *Ruxue* Tradition), Taipei: Shibao wenhua chuban youxian gongsi, 1985, p. 31.

Liang Qichao, *Qing dai xueshu gailun* 清代学术概论 (Overview of Qing Learning), Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1993/1921, pp. 138–139.

Jing Haifeng 景海峰, *Zhongguo zhexue de xiandai quanshi* 中国哲学的现代诠释 (A Modern Interpretation of Chinese Philosophy), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2004, p. 219.

Joachim Kurtz, "Coming to Terms with 'Logic': The Naturalization of an Occidental Notion in China," in Michael Lackner et al. *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China*, Leiden: Brill, 2001, p. 147.

Saito Tsuyoshi 斎藤毅, "Tetsugaku Gogen—Ai Rulüe kara Nishi Amane, Miyake Setsurei made 哲学语源—艾儒略から西周、三宅雪岭まで" (The Origins of the term *Tetsugaku* [Philosophy]—From Ai Rulüe [Giulio Aleni] to Nishi Amane and Miyake Setsurei), in his *Meiji no kotoba: higashi kara nishi e no kakehashi* 明治のことば:东から西への架け桥 (Meiji Words: The Suspension Bridge From East to West), Tokyo: Kodansha, 1977, pp. 342–344).

Shun Kwong-loi, "Studying Confucian and Comparative Ethics: Methodological Reflections," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 36.3 (2009): pp. 456–457, 476.

Shun Kwong-loi, "Studying Confucian and Comparative Ethics: Methodological Reflections," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 36.3 (2009): p. 465.

Yu Yingshi, *Xiandai ruxue lun* 现代儒学论 (New Essays on *Ruxue*), Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1998, 1, pp. 4–6 *passim.*

Yu Yingshi, *Zhu Xi de lishi shijie: Song dai shidafu zhengzhi wenhua de yanjiu* 朱熹的历史世界: 宋代士大夫政治文化的研究 (The Historical World of Zhu Xi: Studies on the Political Culture of *Song Scholar-Officials*), Taipei: Yunchen wenhua shiye gongsi, 2003, 2 volumes.

John Makeham (ed.), *Dao Companion to Neo-Confucian Philosophy*, New York: Springer, 2010, pp. xxxv-xli.

Feng Youlan's *Zhongguo zhexueshi* 中国哲学史 (A History of Chinese Philosophy), Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1934, Vol. 2, pp. 2–3.

Gan Chunsong, *Zhiduhua ruxue ji qi jieti* 制度化儒家及其解体 (Institutionalized *Ruxue* and its Collapse), Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2003, p. 358.

Huang Junjie, *Ruxue yu xiandai Taiwan* 儒学与现代台湾 (*Ruxue* and Modern Taiwan), Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2001, pp. 283–289.

Chün-chieh Huang (=Huang Junjie), "Confucianism in Postwar Taiwan," *Proceedings of the National Science Council, ROC. Part C: Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 2. no. 2, 1992, pp. 228–229.

Taiwan yishi yu Taiwan wenhua, 台湾意识与台湾文化 (Taiwan consciousness and Taiwan culture). Taipei: Zhengzhong, 2000, pp. 200–201.

Chapter 3
From Culture to Cultural Nationalism: A Study of New Confucianism of the 1980s and 1990s

Tze-ki Hon

> *Placed in the museum of history by Joseph Levenson three decades ago, Confucianism has reemerged from the museum "to advance toward the twentieth-first century with a smile on his lips," to quote a recent article in the Renmin ribao.*
>
> Arif Dirlik (2000)

As potently stated in the quotation above, having been a prime target of attack and denunciation for more than half a century, Confucianism enjoyed a robust revival in China in the 1980s and 1990s. By all accounts, this resurgence of Confucianism was spectacular. Rather than a relic of feudalism and a stumbling block to Chinese modernity as the May Fourth cultural iconoclasts once described, Confucianism was seen as an indispensible cultural force that would deliver China into global capitalism. Rather than a sociopolitical system that exploited women, peasants, and the poor as the Red Guards of the Cultural Revolution once despised, Confucianism was considered the wellspring of cultural authenticity that would anchor China's rise in the twenty-first century.[1] A result of this spectacular revival is that Confucianism has become, once again, an important social and cultural force in China after 30 years of absence. This rapid return gives rise to speculations that a transformation "from Communism to Confucianism" is underway.[2]

[1] For a detailed study of this contemporary revival of Confucianism, see John Makeham (2008), especially Chapters 2 and 3.

[2] For an optimistic interpretation of contemporary Confucian revival, see Daniel A. Bell (2008). The phrase "from Communism to Confucianism" comes from the title of Chapter one of Bell's book.

T.-k. Hon (✉)
History Department, State University of New York, Geneseo, NY, USA
e-mail: hon@geneseo.edu

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*, China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_3

Commonly known as "New Confucianism" (*xin rujia* or *xin ruxue*),[3] this late-twentieth-century revival of Confucianism was fundamentally different from the earlier attempts made by the G*uocui* (National Essence) group in 1904–1911 and the *Xueheng* (Critical Review) scholars in 1922–1933.[4] It was, first and foremost, a state-sponsored research project to analyze and classify the writings of a group of scholars who are purportedly New Confucians. The list of New Confucians is long and has been revised from time to time. In general, it includes such luminaries as Liang Shuming, Zhang Junmei, Feng Youlan, Xiong Shili, Ma Yifu, He Lin, Qian Mu, Mou Zhongsan, Tang Junyi, Xu Fuguan, Fang Dongmei, Tu Wei-ming, Liu Shu-hsien, Yu Ying-shi, and Cheng Chung-ying.[5] By naming these scholars as New Confucians, a genealogy was created to denote a lively intellectual movement that began in the 1920s and has continued on to the present day. Through this "retrospective creation of New Confucianism" (as John Makeham's aptly describes) (John Makeham 2003), the researchers legitimized Confucianism as a vital and vibrant force of twentieth-century China.

Equally important, this research on New Confucianism seemed to portend a China that was open to ideas and input from overseas Chinese, particularly those in Hong Kong province, Singapore, Taiwan province, and the United States. In particular, by including scholars who left the mainland in 1949 (e.g., Qian Mu, Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan, and Xu Fuguan) as New Confucians, the research leaders showed a willingness to go beyond the Cold War binary of communism versus anti-communism. Above all, at a time when Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought had lost their appeal to many Chinese on the mainland, the research on New Confucianism appeared to provide an alternative to building "socialism with Chinese characteristics." Based on the successes of Japan and the Four Little Dragons (Hong Kong in China, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan in China), the leaders of the research promoted Confucian capitalism as a viable strategy to build a strong and powerful China.

In what follows, I will analyze the New Confucian research project headed by Fang Keli 方克立. Funded by the Chinese government as part of the seventh (1986–1996) and the eighth (1991–1995) 5-year plans for philosophy and the social sciences, Fang's research project defined the scale and scope of New Confucianism. It also directly linked New Confucianism to Confucian capitalism, thereby inserting the research into the debate of building "socialism with Chinese characteristics." Certainly, as critics have pointed out, Fang's research project was strong in popularizing the writings of New Confucians and weak in analyzing them (Arif Dirlik 1995). Fang and his cohort were also reluctant to engage in a theoretical discussion

[3] Although *xin rujia* (New Confucianism) and *xin ruxue* (New Confucian learning) have slightly different meanings, the mainland researchers used the two terms interchangeably. Fang Keli, the head of the New Confucian research project, did not distinguish the two terms, and he used them as if they were synonymous.

[4] For a study of the Confucian revivals of the Guocui and Xueheng scholars, see my article "National Essence, National Learning, and Culture: Historical Writings *Guocui xuebao, Xueheng,* and *Guoxue jikan*, *Historiography East and West* 1:2 (2003): 242–295.

[5] For a complete list of New Confucians, see Fang Keli 方克立 and Zheng Jiadong 郑家栋 (1995); Fang Keli, Li Jinquan 李锦全 (1995).

of Confucian capitalism, presumably their basis for popularizing New Confucianism in China. Worst still, as self-professed Marxists, they failed to mount a rigorous critique of global capitalism and the social injustice that a capitalistic economy produces (Arif Dirlik 1995, pp. 230–251). Eventually their lack of theoretical reflection left the door open for "homegrown New Confucians" to use New Confucianism to challenge Marxism-Leninism.[6]

Nevertheless, from a historical perspective, Fang's 10-year research project is significant in China's tumultuous transition from socialist revolution of the Mao era to state capitalism of the post-Mao period. Imbued with problems notwithstanding, Fang's research project brought Confucianism back to mainland China after 30 years of absence.[7] More important, it helped to start a discourse of state capitalism that focused on modernity rather than revolution. Whether or not it is in China's interest to "bid farewell to revolution" (*gaobie geming*),[8] it is now a fact that modernity (*xiandai xing*) has replaced revolution as the "key term" of Chinese intellectual debate. At a time when the Chinese economy has grown by leaps and bounds under a state-capitalistic system, it is important to assess the role that Fang's research project played in forming the discourse of Chinese modernity.

This paper will be divided into three sections. In section one I will discuss the purpose of the "retrospective creation of New Confucianism." I argue that the goal of the retrospective creation was not only to solidify the orthodoxy of New Confucianism based on the traditional notion of *daotong* (the Genealogy of the Way).[9] It was also to challenge the "revolutionary historiography" that marked the last century of Chinese history as a series of revolutions. In section two I will examine the significance of dividing New Confucians into three generations of scholars. Simplistic and shallow as it seemed, the genealogy of New Confucians introduced a new perspective that viewed the last hundred years of Chinese history as a continuous saga from building a nation-state to launching state capitalism. In section three, I will examine the way Fang presented Confucian capitalism. Although Fang and his cohort avoided discussing Confucian capitalism, it was undoubtedly the core idea that drove their retrospective creation of New Confucianism. Its absence—or more precisely, its absent presence—revealed a dilemma that Fang faced when, in the milieu of the 1980s and 1990s, he could not directly discuss state capitalism, and yet his task was to introduce the concept of state capitalism into the debate of modernity. In closing my paper, I analyze Fang's brief entry on "Confucian capitalism" in the *Dictionary on Confucius* (*Kongzi da cidian*) where his ambivalence with Confucian capitalism is clearly shown. By analyzing the entry, I highlight the limits of Fang's research project.

---

[6] For a summary of Jiang Qing's view, see Daniel A. Bell (2008), 175–191.

[7] John Makeham, for one, emphasizes Fang's contribution in this respect. See John Makeham (2008), 331–350.

[8] In critiquing the "farewell to revolution," Wang Hui coins the term "depoliticized politics." See Wang Hui (2009). For a succinct summary of the significance of critiquing "the end of the revolution," see Rebecca Karl's foreword to *The End of the Revolution*¸ vii–x.

[9] On the significance of *daotong* in the construction of the genealogy of New Confucians, see John Makeham, "The New Daotong," in *New Confucianism: A Critical Examination*, 55–78.

3.1 Three Intellectual Currents

From the 1920s to the 1980s, the predominant view among Chinese historians was that in the last century, China had undergone a series of revolutions: the 1911 Revolution, the May Fourth New Culture Movement, the Nationalist Revolution, the Communist Revolution, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Although distinct in their own right, these events were linked together to project a teleology of "deepening the Chinese revolution." As the story goes, twentieth-century China began with a political revolution to transform the Chinese empire into a nation-state; then it underwent a cultural revolution to replace Confucianism with Western science and democracy; finally it required a socialist revolution to drastically change the socioeconomic structure of the country. The moral of the story is that China's modernization can only be achieved by completely severing its ties with the past and drastically changing its political, social, and cultural systems.

In the 1980s, Deng Xiaoping's "reform and opening" (*gaige gaifang*) quietly called into question this historical teleology. By replacing "revolution" (*geming*) with "reform" (*gaige*) in political slogan, Deng puts emphasis on cultural continuity and gradual change. Encapsulated in his enigmatic phrase "building socialism with Chinese characteristics," he stressed China's uniqueness and cultural heritage in its quest for modernity. In the academic field, Deng's "reform and opening" had had important consequences. One was the call to "bidding farewell to revolution" in the early 1990s, in which scholars such as Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu asked his colleagues to take revolution out of modern Chinese history and reinterpret twentieth-century China from new perspectives (Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu 1995). The other development was the rise of interest in the "new national learning" (*xin guoxue*) in the 1990s, in which cultural conservatism was presented as a vital force in modernizing China, along with liberalism and radicalism (Jing Wang 1996). Accomplished scholars in the Republican period who were foreign trained but were strongly interested in Chinese culture (such as Wang Guowei, Chen Yinke, and Tang Yongtong) were raised as models for a post-revolutionary scholarship that would recover the "suppressed Chinese modernity" when China was building a nation-state.

It was in this context of "bidding farewell to revolution" and "recovering the suppressed Chinese modernity" that Fang's 10-year research on New Confucianism emerged. As Song Xianlin reminds us, the research on New Confucianism appeared between the "culture craze" (*wenhua re*) of the 1980s when the revolutionary historiography was under attack and the "national studies craze" (*guoxue re*) of the 1990s when cultural conservatism was in vogue as an alternative to "total Westernization" of the liberals.[10] Fang Keli himself was mindful of the times when he discussed the goal of studying New Confucianism. He repeatedly stressed that the premise of the study was the coexistence of three intellectual currents (*sichao*) since the 1920s: Marxism-Leninism, Liberalism, and Conservatism. In spite of their differing

[10] Song Xianlin, "Reconstructing the Confucian Ideal in 1980s China: The "Culture Craze" and New Confucianism," in John Makeham (2003), 81–104.

assumptions and approaches, Fu reiterated that these three intellectual currents offered valuable insights and inspirations to China's quest for modernity. For instance, in a key statement about New Confucianism, he wrote:

> New Confucianism has been undoubtedly one of the influential and vital intellectual movements in modern China since the May Fourth movement. It forms a triad with Marxism and Liberalism. It has grown as a unique intellectual current in opposing "total westernization" [of the liberals] on the one hand, and hampering the successful progress of Marxism in China on the other. Although different in approaches, the three intellectual currents share the same goal of modernizing China (Fang Keli 1997).

Two points are important in this quote. First is the time frame. Fang dates the beginning of New Confucianism in the 1920s, despite the fact that some forms of Confucian revival already appeared in the late Qing (e.g., Kang Youwei) and during the 1911 Revolution (e.g., Zhang Taiyan and Liu Shipei). By dating the beginning of New Confucianism in the 1920s, Fang makes it contemporaneous with the May Fourth New Culture Movement and the arrival of the Marxism-Leninism. The date conveniently supports Fang's claim for the coexistence of the three intellectual currents and underscores the potential for dialogue and collaboration right from the beginning. Second, Fang stresses the similarity between Marxism-Leninism, Liberalism, and New Confucianism. According to Fang, they are quintessentially doctrines of modernization sharing the same goal of strengthening the wealth and power of the Chinese nation. This common goal—i.e., the modernity of China—drew the three intellectual currents together as a triad, and yet each maintained its uniqueness by emphasizing one particular aspect of modernity: the socialist modernity of one-party state for the Marxists, the Euro-American model of market modernity for the liberals, and the East Asian form of state-capitalistic modernity for the conservatives.[11]

Certainly, as a self-professed Marxists, Fang and his cohort stressed the supremacy of socialist modernity over market modernity and East Asian modernity.[12] At the same time, they also emphasized the importance for dialogue and collaboration. By championing an open and fluid relation among the three intellectual currents, they tacitly acknowledged that Marxism-Leninism had lost its monopoly in determining the direction of Chinese modernity. Instead, the future of China had to draw elements from the three forms of modernity: the one-party state in political structure, a dynamic and robust market in economy, and a strong cultural identity among the Chinese citizens. In short, it would have to combine the three forms of modernity to create what we now know the state capitalism of twenty-first-century China.

---

[11] In his writings, Fang did not explicitly spell out what exactly that drew the "three intellectual currents" into a dialogue and collaboration. But on several occasions, Fang linked the "three intellectual currents" to the debate among the Marxists, the liberals, and the conservatives in the 1980s and 1990s. The debate, as Wang Hui has pointed out, was how to reconfigure the political and socioeconomic structure of the Mao party state in the name of "building socialism with Chinese characteristics." See Wang Hui, "The Year 1989 and the Historical Roots of Neoliberalism in China," in Wang Hui (2009), 19–66.

[12] See, for instance, Fang Keli, 《关于现代新儒家研究的几个问题》 (A Few Questions Regarding the Study of Modern New Confucianism), in Fang Keli (1997), 17–34.

The significance of this composite view of Chinese modernity is that it offers a totally new perspective of modern Chinese history. Rather than separating time into waves of revolution, the last hundred years of Chinese history is seen as a unified whole undergirded by three streams of thought. Of course, at each given time, one form of modernity is in dominance, such as liberalism was in vogue during the May Fourth New Culture Movement, and Marxism was the ruling ideology under Mao's socialist revolution. Nevertheless, the dominance is never total. There is always space for contestation and dissent, as other forms of modernity in the background offering alternative visions to modernizing China.

3.2 Three Generations of New Confucians

An important breakthrough in historiography notwithstanding, in the 1980s and 1990s, it was still unclear how to combine the three forms of modernity and how to reconcile their fundamental differences (particularly between the one-party state and the neoliberal market economy). But at that time, it was clear that the task for Fang and his cohort was to explore and explicate what was known as Confucian capitalism—a particular form of state-market relationship perfected in East Asia in the 1970s and 1980s. Called variably as the "East Asia economic miracle," "capitalistic development state," or the "plan rational economy," Confucian capitalism was based on a reinterpretation of Max Weber's argument for the cultural aspect of capitalism. Instead of the Protestant ethics being the driving force of the capitalistic spirit as Max Weber suggested, the supporters of Confucian capitalism regarded the Confucian ethics as the cultural foundation of the East Asian capitalist success. The argument was complex including export-oriented economy, state planning, family-based entrepreneurship, social harmony, team-player spirit, and long-hour work ethics. And it was proven, as supporters claimed, by the rapid economic growth in Japan and the Four Little Dragons.[13] But, as Arif Dirlik points out, the significance of Confucian capitalism is not limited to economic performance and the improvement in the standard of living of East Asian people. More important, it challenges the Euro-American model of neoliberal market capitalism and underscores the importance of reinventing tradition in modernization (Arif Dirlik 2000, p. 135). For Fang and his cohort, the goal of their study was to gain a handle of the theory and practice of Confucian capitalism through studying New Confucianism. To that end, they must find out what New Confucianism meant and who the New Confucians were.

In 1987, a year after the New Confucian research began, Fang made an initial attempt to give a concise definition of New Confucianism. That definition later became the basis for deciding who were included or excluded in the genealogy of New Confucians. First, let us examine Fang's definition:

[13] For a cogent argument for Confucian capitalism, see Gilbert Rozman (1991). See also Hung-chao Tai (1989).

> In terms of historical context, New Confucianism differs both from Classical Confucianism of the pre-Qin period and Neo-Confucianism of the Song-Ming period. As an intellectual movement of twentieth-century China, New Confucianism is a response to the challenge of Western culture and the need for China modernization. To solve China's problems, New Confucian thinkers adopt, integrate, and transform Western contemporary ideas and culture from the perspective of Confucianism. Their goal is to find a more balanced path for China's modernization, preserving Chinese traditional culture on the one hand and accepting Western new ideas on the other.[14]

Besides reiterating the time frame and the link to Chinese modernity, this definition added a new dimension to understanding New Confucianism. It highlighted three characteristics in its teaching: (1) its goal of reviving Confucianism in the modern age, (2) its emphasis on moral self-cultivation drawn from Classical Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism, and (3) its twofold strategy of highlighting Chinese uniqueness on the one hand and opening to foreign learning on the other. From our historical hindsight, these three characteristics of the New Confucian teaching were by no means random. In fact, they were intentional to set a baseline for deciding who the New Confucians were.

First and foremost, the three characteristics gave privilege to Xiong Shili and his students (Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan, and Xu Fuguan) who claimed to continue the Lu-Wang school of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. In other words, from the beginning, Fang and his cohort decided that the core group of New Confucians had to be Xiong and his students. There were several reasons for the researchers to place a premium on Xiong and his students. First, after leaving the mainland after 1949, Xiong's students had produced voluminous writings critiquing the modern life and highlighting the value of Neo-Confucianism as a humanistic tradition. Of Xiong's students, Mou Zongsan was particularly outstanding in using the moral philosophy of the Lu-Wang school to challenge the Kantian philosophy.[15] Mou's bold attempt signified at once the possibility of a dialogue between the Eastern and Western philosophies and the value of Confucianism as an alternative form of modernity. Second, Xiong's students had managed to attract a small but solid group of supporters in overseas Chinese communities, most prominently the Fazhu 法住 group in Hong Kong and the Ehu 鹅湖 writers in Taiwan of China.[16] They proved that their learning had an impact on overseas Chinese in solving problems of modern life, and they would continue to have an influence on overseas Chinese communities in years to come. Third, Xiong's students had made an impact on a small number of foreign-trained Chinese scholars (such as Tu Wei-ming and Liu Shu-hsien) who became their spokesmen in international academic circles. Of these scholars, Tu played a special role in globalizing Mou Zongsan's philosophy, making it a system of thought to address questions of modern times. Tu was particularly effective in linking New Confucianism to Confucian capitalism by promoting "the third epoch of

[14] Fang Keli, 《关于现代新儒家研究的几个问题》 (A Few Questions Regarding the Studies of Modern New Confucianism), in Fang Keli (1997), 20–21.

[15] See Mou Zongsan (1968).

[16] Fang Keli, 《现代新儒家的发展历程》 (The Development Process of Modern New Confucianism), in Fang Keli (1997), 139–141.

Confucianism," i.e., Confucianism for the modern age vis-à-vis Confucianisms for Early China and Imperial China (Du Weiming 1998). Thus, for Fang and his cohort, honoring Xiong and his students was tantamount to inserting Confucian capitalism into the debate on Chinese modernity.

Heavily tilted toward Xiong and his students notwithstanding, Fang also left the door open to include other scholars, especially scholars who chose to remain on the mainland after 1949. The key point in Fang's definition of New Confucianism is its goal to revive Confucian learning in modern time. Throughout his definition, he avoided specifying the contents of the Confucian learning. Even when he discussed the influence of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism, he was silent on the type of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism that actually made an impact on the New Confucians. Fang's silence was intentional because if he equated Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism to the Lu-Wang school that Xiong and his students supported, then he would have to endorse them as the true New Confucians. By keeping silence on the type of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism that had an impact on the New Confucians, he opened the possibility for including other scholars (such as Qian Mu, Feng Youlan) who were fond of the Cheng-Zhu school.

Feng Youlan, in particular, was important to Fang's attempt to include mainland scholars into the pantheon of New Confucians. Unlike Liang Shuming, whose credentials for being a Confucian (or perhaps, the "Last Confucian") were established before the Communist Revolution and in his spirited debate with Chairman Mao in the early 1950s, Feng's status as a Confucian was questionable because he was primarily a historian of Chinese philosophy with no particular preference for Confucianism or a particular Confucian school. Active in the mainland Chinese academy until his death, his reputation as an independent scholar was somewhat tarnished after he worked for the Gang of Four during the "anti-Lin Bao and anti-Confucius" campaign. Yet, Fang and his cohort made a great effort to include him into the pantheon of New Confucians. In so doing, they made an important statement that mainland scholars had had a role in developing New Confucianism. Despite the continuous political campaigns chastising Confucianism as a relic of feudalism, there were incipient, hidden forces of Confucian revival on the mainland.

On this score, John Makeham's observation about the "retrospective creation of New Confucianism" is extremely insightful. It points to the purposes behind Fang's construction of the New Confucian genealogy which, after several years of debate and deliberations, is divided into three groups. First, from the 1920s to 1940s, the New Confucians include Liang Shuming, Ma Yifu, Zhang Junmai, Feng Youlan, He Lun, and Xiong Shili. The list juxtaposes New Confucianism with the May Fourth New Culture Movement, the debate on philosophy and life view, the comparison of the Eastern and Western philosophy, and the wartime rethinking of philosophy. More important, the list is deliberately inclusive such that Xiong Shili is at best one of the early New Confucians. This inclusiveness in the first generation of New Confucians sends a strong signal to Xiong's students that despite what they claim, they are not the only New Confucians in contemporary China. Second, from the 1950s to the 1980s, the New Confucians include Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan, Xu

Fuguan, and Fang Dongmei. By including only scholars who left the mainland in 1949, the list acknowledges that except in overseas Chinese communities, New Confucianism had had no role on the mainland due to Mao's socialist revolution. Third, from the 1980s to the present, the New Confucians include Tu Wei-ming, Liu Shu-hsien, Yu Ying-shi, and Cheng Chung-ying. All of them are foreign-trained scholars based in Western academic institutions. They use Confucianism to address contemporary issues of modern society and capitalistic system. Overall, despite their differences in age, predilection, and career path, these three generations of New Confucians are part of the "third epoch of Confucianism" when Confucianism is transformed into a modern philosophy for both the Chinese and the global community.

Of the third generation of New Confucians, Fang gave special attention to Tu Wei-ming and Liu Shu-hsien. He identified the two scholars as the leaders of the third generation. To this end, he wrote detailed summaries of their writings to promote their scholarship.[17] Even when other scholars such as Yu Ying-shi and Cheng Chung-ying were added to the list of the third generation, Fang still regarded Tu and Liu as more influential and significant in their generation. On one level, it seems obvious that Fang would regard Tu and Liu as the representatives of the third generation. Firstly, they are US-trained scholars having a successful academic career teaching Confucian philosophy in well-regarded universities (Harvard for Tu and the Chinese University of Hong Kong for Liu). Together, they represent the success of the third-generation New Confucians in globalizing Confucianism. Secondly, they are opened to dialogue with colleagues on the mainland with less ideological baggage than earlier New Confucians such as Mou Zongsan.[18] Their openness fits perfectly with the relaxed and fluid atmosphere that Fang wanted to cultivate in promoting "the coexistence of the three intellectual currents of modern China."

But on another level, Fang did not only see Tu and Liu as New Confucians. He also saw them as valuable players in the discourse of modernity on the mainland. In summarizing the writings of Tu and Liu, Fang stressed their contributions in critiquing the lack of humanistic learning in modern society,[19] and in highlighting the need to transform the Confucian social structure (especially patriarchy and the patrilineal family system) to fit the needs of the modern life.[20] In Tu and Liu, Fang found a concrete expression of what he deemed as the modernity of New Confucianism. It was, on the one hand, aimed at solving problems of modern society and modern life. It was, on the other, based on a critical reflection of the Confucian tradition in hopes

[17] Fang Like, 《现代新儒家的发展历程》 (The Development Process of Modern New Confucianism), in Fang Keli (1997), 143–150; 《杜维明新儒家思想述评》(A Study of Tu Wei-ming's New Confucian Thought), in Fang Keli (1997), 362–381.

[18] Fang Like complained bitterly of Mou Zongsan's anti-Communist stand. See Fang Keli, 《第三代新儒家掠影》 (Glimpses of the Third-Generation New Confucians), in Fang Keli (1997), 54–63.

[19] Fang Keli, 《现代新儒家的发展历程》 (The Development Process of Modern New Confucianism), in Fang Keli (1997), 143–146.

[20] Fang Keli, 《现代新儒家的发展历程》 (The Development Process of Modern New Confucianism), in Fang Keli (1997), 146-150.

of transforming it for the modern time. Because of these critical and self-reflective modes of thinking, at one time Fang went so far as comparing New Confucianism favorably to Marxism and Liberalism. In his words, "Regarding the three intellectual trends in modern China, namely, Marxism-Leninism, Westernization [based on Liberalism] and New Confucianism, each of them has its strength and resources. But they are linked together not only in contention and competition, but also in harmonization and mutual influence."[21] Such a positive assessment of New Confucianism was indeed unusual. Despite the disclaimers he issued regularly about the superiority of Marxism and the need to critique New Confucianism from the Marxist perspective of class struggle, he put New Confucianism on the same footing as Marxism. To his credit, he was serious and consistent in affirming New Confucianism as a philosophy supporting Confucian capitalism.

3.3 Confucian Capitalism

What is intriguing, however, is that in Fang's writings, he had little to say about Confucian capitalism. For Fang and his cohort, Confucian capitalism was a term, a symbol that they had to keep in order to sustain their study of New Confucianism. But in essence, Confucian capitalism was an empty sign that had neither substance nor concrete meaning. A clear example of Confucian capitalism as an empty sign is Fang's brief entry on the subject in *The Dictionary of Confucius*. There, he defined Confucian capitalism as follows:

> [Confucian capitalism] is a model of development adopted by New Confucians to achieve capitalistic modernity based on Confucian culture and Confucian thought. It is different from the developmental models for industrialization and modernization that appear in Western Europe and North America on the one hand, and Soviet Union and Eastern Europe on the other. According to the New Confucians, the recent twenty years of rapid economic growth in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong of China, and Singapore disprove [Max] Weber's theory of secularization. They argue that besides the Protestant ethics, the Confucian ethics is also a potent force of the capitalistic spirit because of its religiosity and secularizing function. The Confucian ethics has been a main reason for the East Asian economic miracle.[22]

By cleverly linking New Confucianism to Confucian capitalism, Fang again reiterated the prominent role that New Confucians played in the discourse of modernity. Nonetheless, besides using the East Asian economic miracle as evidence of the success of Confucian capitalism, Fang said little about what Confucian capitalism entailed. Nor did he specify the type of the Confucian ethics that purportedly drove the East Asian economic miracle. Despite the fact that by the early 1990s there was a large body of literature examining the East Asian "developmental state" and

[21] Fang Keli, 《展望儒学的未来前景必须正视的两个问题》 (Two Important Questions Concerning the Future of Confucianism), in Fang Keli (1997), 188.

[22] Fang Keli, 〈儒家资本主义〉 (Confucian Capitalism), in Fang Keli (1997), 458.

"bureaucratic capitalism," Fang seemed to have no knowledge of it. Instead, vaguely and briefly, he quoted Tu Wei-ming on the Confucian impact in education, social cohesion, work ethics, and entrepreneurship.[23]

What is more striking is how Fang ended the entry. In concluding the entry, he changed his position sharply and abruptly. Rather than continue to discuss the link between Confucian ethics and Confucian capitalism, he assumed the role of the critic. Without giving any specific example, he argued that the East Asian economic miracle could not be understood solely from the perspective of culture and ideas.[24] Totally contradicting to what he said earlier, he cautioned his readers not to accept the New Confucians' argument for Confucian capitalism. Nor should they adopt the New Confucian position in contemplating an East Asian modernity. Practically split into two halves with two opposite argument, the short entry shows Fang's predicament in using the research of New Confucianism to promote Confucian capitalism. Caught in the volatile political environment of the 1980s and 1990s, when the Marxists, liberals, and conservatives were juggling for power and influence to shape the policies of the CCP, Fang realized that he was walking through a political land mine in advocating Confucian capitalism. To protect himself and to protect his project, he had to engage in double-talk. And Fang's double-talk became more frequent in the 1990s when he was attacked from three sides: (1) the "homegrown New Confucians" (such as Luo Yijun and Jiang Qing) who wanted to use New Confucianism to challenge the CCP; (2) the CCP ideologues who were unhappy with Fang's being uncritical of Confucian capitalism; and (3) the scholars in Taiwan and Hong Kong who saw Fang's research project as a political ploy to reach out to overseas Chinese communities.[25]

Double-talk notwithstanding, the significance of Fang's research project lies not in promoting New Confucianism or introducing Confucian capitalism into the debate of modernity. Its true contribution is bringing two important issues into the Chinese discourse of modernity. One is the need for the Chinese to preserve their cultural authenticity in their quest for modernity. Whether it is cultural nationalism or cultural conservatism, the Chinese since the 1990s have been adding more and more items of "Chinese characteristics" when following the CCP's call for "building socialism." Certainly, there are a number of factors (including the advertising strategies of the popular culture market) that have led to this emphasis on the Chinese characteristics. Nevertheless, the rationale for Fang's research project was to examine the New Confucians' attempt at reinventing the Confucian tradition to serve the modern times. On this score, Fang's research is a resounding success.

[23] Fang Keli, 〈儒家资本主义〉 (Confucian Capitalism), in Fang Keli (1997), 458.

[24] Fang Keli, 〈儒家资本主义〉 (Confucian Capitalism), in Fang Keli (1997), 459.

[25] After 1992, Fang Keli had to deal with criticisms from many sides. Consequently, his writings became polemical and defensive. He was less forthcoming in promoting the dialogue and cooperation with scholars outside China. Fang also identified 1992 as the year when "mainland New Confucians" made their voice known in public. For a clear example of Fang's change, see his article 《现代新儒家研究的自我回省—敬答诸位批评者》 (The Self-criticism of the Study of Modern New Confucianism—A Respectful Reply to My Critic), in Fang Keli (1997), 192–209.

Second, while being vague on what Confucian capitalism meant and unclear on how New Confucianism could help to achieve capitalistic growth, Fang's call for "the coexistence of Marxism, Liberalism, and Conservatism" has become the formula for building the Chinese style of state capitalism. The coexistence of the three intellectual currents turns out to be the groundwork for building (what Rebecca Karl calls) "the state-market-intellectuals complex."[26] In hindsight, on the surface Fang's research project might be aimed at exploring and explicating New Confucianism; in essence it was an intellectual rehearsal for forming the alliance of state, market, and intellectuals.

References

Arif Dirlik, "Reveals, Ironies, Hegemonies: Notes on the Contemporary Historiography of Modern China," in *History After the Three Worlds: Post-Eurocentric Historiography*, edited by Arif Dirlik, Vinay Bahl, and Peter Gran (Landham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 127.

John Makeham, "The Retrospective Creation of New Confucianism, in John Makeham, ed., *New Confucianism: A Critical Examination*, edited by John Makeham (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 25–53.

Arif Dirlik, "Confucius in the Borderlands: Global Capitalism and the Reinvention of Confucianism," *boundary 2,* 22, 3 (1995): 261–271.

Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu, *Guobie geming: Huiwang ershi shiji Zhongguo* 告别革命:回望二十世纪中国 (Farewell to Revolution: Looking Back on Twentieth-Century China) (Hong Kong: Tiandi tushu youxian gongsi, 1995).

Jing Wang, *High Culture Fever: Politics, Aesthetics, and Ideology in Deng's China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 37-117.

Fang Keli, 《略论现代新儒家之得失》 (A Brief Assessment of the Strengths and Weaknesses of Modern New Confucianism), in Fang Keli, *Xiandai xinrujia yu Zhongguo xiandai hua* 现代新儒家与中国现代化》 (Modern New Confucianism and China's Modernization) (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshi, 1997), 46.

Du Weiming (Tu Wei-ming), 《儒学第三期发展的前景问题》 (The Prospect for the Development of the Third Epoch of Confucianism), in *Bainian Zhongguo zhexue jingdian: Bashi naindai yilai juan* 百年中国哲学经典:八十年代以来卷 (The Classics of Chinese Philosophy in the Last Hundred Years: Section on the Post-1980s) (Shenzhen: Haitian chuban-she, 1998), 502-530. Tu's article was first appeared in 1986 in *Mingbao yuekan*.

John Makeham, *Lost Soul: "Confucianism" in Contemporary Chinese Academic Discourse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008)

Daniel A. Bell, *China's New Confucianism: Politics and Every Life in a Changing Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

Fang Keli 方克立 and Zheng Jiadong 郑家栋, ed., *Xiandai xinrujia renwu yu zhuzuo* 现代新儒家人物与著作 (The Modern New Confucians and Their Writings) (Tianjin: Nankai daxue chubanshe, 1995)

Fang Keli, Li Jinquan 李锦全, ed., *Xiandai xinrujia xuean* 现代新儒家学案 (Intellectual Biographies of Modern New Confucians) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1995)

[26] Rebecca Karl's foreword to *The End of the Revolution*¸ ix

Wang Hui, *The End of the Revolution: China and the Limits of Modernity* (London: Verso, 2009), 3–19

Gilbert Rozman, *The East Asian Region: Confucian Heritage and Its Modern Adaptations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991)

Hung-chao Tai, ed., *Confucianism and Economic Development: An Oriental Alternative?* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute Press, 1989)

Mou Zongsan, *Xinti yu xingti* 心体与性体 (The Essence of Human Ming and the Essence of Human Nature) (Taipei: Zhengzhong shuju, 1968), introduction, 1–196.

Chapter 4
A Study on Pre-Qin Confucian Scholars' Environmental Ethics

Qiyong Guo and Tao Cui

The investigation of environmental problems from an ethical angle occurred simultaneously with the crisis of human survival caused by serious environmental destruction. Scholars in China started to pay attention to environmental issues in the 1970s, but substantial investigation and research began only in the 1990s, marked by the founding of the Chinese Association of Environmental Ethics in 1994. After probing deeper into environmental problems, many Western scholars have begun to think about other traditions, including Daoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and others, but they have often overlooked the contribution of Confucianism to this field. In 2002, researchers organized a Confucianism and Ecology Conference in Beijing at which the relationship between Confucianism and the natural environment was broadly discussed. Although modern academics find the theoretical systems helpful, Confucian scholars did not consciously conduct a systematic discourse on environmental ethics. This means that applying the resources of Confucian philosophy to think through the human problems concerning the contemporary natural environment involves adaptive reinterpretation outside those traditions' social and epistemological contexts. This essay considers how such a project of reconstitution might begin with pertinent Confucian sources that were written before the Qin Dynasty.[1]

[1] The Qin Dynasty (221–206 BC) created the first centralized bureaucratic Chinese state. The flowering of Chinese classical thought took place during the periods immediately preceding it. [Translator's note]

Q. Guo (✉)
Wuhan University, Whuan, China
URL: http://www.whutx.cn

T. Cui
Shanxi University, Shanxi, China

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd
and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*,
China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_4

4.1 The "Supreme Virtue of the Creation and Procreation": Confucian Scholars' Understanding of Ecosystem in Pre-Qin China

An ecosystem consists of all the animals, plants, microbes, and abiotic components in a specific place. They are involved in a stable and lasting material and energy exchange and form an interdependent relationship with one other. Confucian thought on the relation between humans and all the things in the universe reflect their understanding of the ecosystem of their own situation.

In ancient China, the term Heaven and Earth[2] was only not a concept of physical space. In the dictionary *Yupian*, Xu Kai defines "universe" as "dwelling"—"All things dwell within Heaven and Earth, as if one lives in a room and knows nothing about the changes outside of it."[3] People in ancient China understood Heaven and Earth as the greater dwelling place. This approach brings the external environment closer and friendlier to human beings. Confucian scholars in pre-Qin period considered the universe as an environment in which humans lived. While they put Heaven and Earth on the highest level in the hierarchy of all that exists, they termed the trinity of Heaven, Earth, and Humanity as the "Three Powers." *The Book of Changes* says, "There is the way of heaven, the way of man, and the way of earth. Each (trigram) embraced those three Powers." Heaven contains the sun, the moon, and the stars. Earth contains all creatures. Humans, who can comprehend the ways of Heaven and Earth, represent the third power. Heaven and Earth is basically the equivalent of an "ecosystem" in today's environmental ethics. But the "ecosystem" referred as Heaven and Earth here in its broadest sense includes the whole living organisms, abiotic components, the surface and atmosphere of the Earth and even outer space.[4] In this approach, the entire ecological environment (Heaven and Earth) is seen as a unifier of human beings with all other things in the universe. Fundamentally, pre-Qin Confucian scholars thought this system carried the "supreme virtue of creation and procreation" just it says in the "Xi Ci" chapter of the *Book of Changes*: "The great virtue of Heaven and Earth is the creation and recreation of life," and "The procreation of creatures is what is called (the process of) change." There are three levels of meanings here:

[2] In the context of Confucian philosophy, the term "Heaven and Earth" has a broad and flexible meaning. It can refer to as tiny as the surrounding where a person or an object dwells or as huge as the whole natural environment and human society or even the whole universe. However, the term "Heaven and Earth" in this paper not only refers to the whole ecosystem but also implies to the supreme power of creation in the ecosystem, which is generated by the union of "Heaven" and "Earth." It should be noticed that an intense cosmological quality pervades Confucian scholars' understanding of the ecosystem.

[3] "Xu Kai," *ShuoWen Xi Zhuang*, book 14

[4] "Xi Ci I," *The Book of Changes*

1. Production and reproduction is creativity, the perfect reflection of Heaven and Earth

   For Confucian scholars in the pre-Qin period, Heaven is the origin of all the virtues. *The Book of Poetry* states: "Heaven, in giving birth to the multitudes of the people,/to every faculty and relationship annexed its law./The people possess this normal nature,/and they [consequently] love its perfect virtue." In Confucianism, the "perfect virtue" of Heaven is the Pure Good, which is different from good deeds in mundane morality and free from any thoughts and emotions. "It gives their stimulus to all things, without having the same anxieties that possess the sage."[5] The only realization of the normal virtue of Heaven is through the "procreation of creatures," giving human beings and all the things their physical shapes and internal values. Therefore Confucius said, "Does Heaven speak? The four seasons pursue their courses, and all things are continually being produced, but does Heaven say anything?" Heaven is not like a human being who can express himself, yet through the rotation of the four seasons and the creation of all the things, it realizes its virtue of creation. By giving the shapes to and dictating the natures for all the species, Heaven shows its good intentions. Therefore, creation and procreation imply a value judgment.
2. Creation and procreation are the ceaseless internal dynamics of Heaven and Earth

   Heaven and Earth are creating things ceaselessly and constantly. In the Xu Gua chapter of the *Book of Changes*, which expounds the creation of all the things by Heaven and Earth and their developments, the hexagram *tun* is first introduced. *Tun*, which means fullness, is a description of the genesis of the Heaven and Earth. When we try to understand the beginning of creation, Heaven and Earth are already fulfilled with all the things and full of life. Heaven and Earth never stop their process of "creation and procreation." The last hexagram introduced in the "Xu Gua" chapter is "*wei ji*"—"The succession of events cannot come to an end, and therefore *ji* is succeeded by *wei ji*." *Wei ji* means incomplete. Because of endless creation, the *Book of Changes* points out that we can neither trace the beginning nor predict the end of Heaven and Earth.
3. Through creation and procreation, Heaven and Earth gave birth of all the things

   Confucian scholars considered the power of creation and procreation inherent in Heaven and Earth as the most important principle in the world. Without that, nothing will exist. That is the reason why in the "Shuo Gua" chapter of the *Book of Changes*, the hexagrams of *gan* and *kun* that represent the Heaven and "Earth," respectively, are also called "father" and "mother." "By the united action of Heaven and Earth all things spring up."[6] "Heaven and Earth are the root of life."[7] All the living species and nonliving things are created by the powers of Heaven and Earth. The resources created by Heaven and Earth make even the artificial materials that exist.

---

[5] Ibid.

[6] The "Jiaotesheng" chapter of the *Liji* (*The Classic of Rites*, this translation used below as reference)

[7] "Lilun" chapter in *The Xunzi*

The most distinguishing characteristic of an ecosystem is its sustainable productivity over time. Creation and procreation are its ultimate concern. Then, how does the "supreme virtue of creation and procreation" of Heaven and Earth—in the process of the creation and nourishment of all the things—happen? This leads us to the question of harmony, the most important philosophical concept in pre-Qin Confucianism. It is not only a concept relating to the perfection of a personality or a state of mind but also the prerequisite and principle for Heaven and Earth to practice and accomplish the "supreme virtue of creation and procreation." An early discourse on the relation between harmony and "creation" can be found in the *Discourse of States* in the late Western Zhou Dynasty:

> Harmony is indeed productive of things. But sameness does not advance growth. All things in an equilibrium is called harmony. For this reason things come together and flourish. If one uses the same thing to complement the same thing, it is a dead end and will be wasted… In all of this, the Former Kings took their consorts from other clans…made every effort to bring things into harmony.[8]

There is a difference between harmony and homogeneity: the former refers to a good match of heterogeneous factors, hence productive of new things; the latter refers to a simple combination of homogeneous factors that cannot create new things. Based on empirical experiences, the Western Zhou Dynasty (1046–771 BC) people realized that "usually, when a man and a woman of the same surname marry, their offspring do not prosper"[9]; thus there was a taboo against consanguineous marriage. Not only for the procreation of children but also in what the *Guoyu* (*Discourses of the States*) expounded is a general principle that can be applied for all the other things: "Harmony is indeed productive of things. But sameness does not advance growth." Only for the reason of "harmony," "things come together and flourish"; otherwise, "it comes to a dead end and will become wasted." This understanding of harmony was inherited by Confucian scholars and was elaborated as a fundamental principle for the whole ecosystem's "supreme virtue of creation and procreation." That is why *The Classic of Rites* says, "Heaven and earth are in harmonious co-operation. All plants bud and grow,"[10] and "From that harmony all things receive their being."[11] The creation and procreation of "all plants" and "all things" are because of harmony.

The pre-Qin Confucian scholars thought the "transformation and production of living things arise from harmony." The best demonstration of that is the union of Heaven/*yang* and Earth/*yin. The Classic of Rites* says, "If there were not the united action of Heaven and Earth, the world of things would not grow."[12] The *Xunzi* states: "When Heaven and Earth conjoin, the myriad things are begot; when the *yin* and

[8] "Zhengyu" chapter in the *Guoyu* (*Discourses of the States*)

[9] "Duke Xi Twenty-Third Year," in *Zuozhuan* (the *Zuo* Commentary)

[10] "Yue Ling" chapter in *The Classic of Rites*

[11] "Yue Ji" chapter in *The Classic of Rites*

[12] "Ai Gong Wen" chapter in *The Classic of Rites*

yang principles combine, transformations and transmutations are produced."[13] The union and conjunction of Heaven and Earth is the prerequisite of the birth, flourishing, and evolution of all the things. King Wen of Zhou, when illustrating the *gui mei* hexagrams (*zhen* trigram above, *dui* trigram below) said, "By *gui mei* (the marrying away of a younger sister) the great and righteous relation between Heaven and Earth [is suggested to us]. If Heaven and Earth were to have no intercommunication, things would not grow and flourish as they do." Marriage should be the "great and righteous relation between Heaven and Earth." In the *gui mei* hexagram, however, the "weak lines are mounted on strong lines" and the course between *yin* and "*yang* is blocked. As a result, "if Heaven and Earth were to have no intercommunication, things would not grow and flourish as they do." On the contrary, when illustrating the *xian* hexagrams (*dui* trigram above, *gen* trigram below), King Wen says, "*Xian* is here used in the sense of *kan*, meaning (mutually) influencing. The weak [trigram] above, and the strong one below; their two influences moving and responding to each other…Heaven and Earth exert their influences, and there ensues the transformation and production of all things." Since the strong and weak lines are correctly arranged in the hexagram and the "Heaven and Earth exert their influences," it fulfills the conditions for harmony, so can "ensue the transformation and production of all things." In the *Book of Changes*, Heaven and Earth are the most significant expressions of the powers of *yang* and *yin*, respectively, and their union is the greatest source of creative power for the whole ecosystem. Therefore, the *Book of Changes* states: "(The trigrams) *qian* and *kun* may be regarded as the gate of the *yi. Qian* represents what is of the *yang* nature (bright and active); *kun* what is of the *yin* nature (shaded and inactive). The *yin* and *yang* unite according to their qualities, and so there comes the embodiment of the result in the strong and weak (lines). In this way we have the phenomena of Heaven and Earth visibly illustrated, and the operation of the spiritual intelligence can be comprehended." When "*yin* and *yang* unite," Heaven and Earth are in harmony. For Confucian scholars of pre-Qin period, this is the key to understanding the production and transformation of all things in the ecosystem.

The union of Heaven and Earth is also the dynamic whereby the ecosystem renews and transforms itself. As King Wen mentioned, "Heaven and earth undergo their changes, and the four seasons complete their functions…Great indeed is what takes place at a time of change!" From this, new species and new phenomena emerge continuously in the ecosystem. The rotation of the four seasons always reflects the progress and evolution in the ecosystem. Therefore, the *Book of Changes* states: "The ever-recurring changes correspond to the four seasons" and "Of things that change and extend an influence [on others] there are none greater than the four seasons."[14] All things acquire their forms and grow and develop in the changing of seasons. This is a dynamic demonstration of the harmony between Heaven and Earth or *yin* and *yang* producing and transforming all living things. The "Yue Ji" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads:

[13] "Li Lun" chapter of *The Xunzi*

[14] "Xi Ci I" chapter in the *Yijing* (*The Book of Changes*, this translation used below as reference)

> Heaven and Earth act on each other. The susceptibilities of nature are roused by the thunder, excited by the wind and rain, moved by the four seasons, and warmed by the sun and moon; and all the processes of change and growth vigorously proceed. Thus it was that music was framed to indicate the harmonious action of Heaven and Earth.

Music is considered to be the reflection of the "harmonious action of Heaven and Earth." On the other hand, Heaven and Earth stimulate the dual powers of *yang* and *yin* with thunder, wind, and rain, presenting their "supreme virtue of production and reproduction" quietly throughout four seasons.

Pre-Qin Confucian scholars deepened our understanding of the Heaven/*yang* and Earth/*yin* and their "supreme virtue of creation and procreation" and their "transformation and production of living things ensuing from harmony." For them, the ecosystem is an ever-reproducing system as well as a harmonious and symbiotic community of lives. They perceived Heaven and Earth as a great habitat, and this insight has considerable influence in contemporary environmental ethics.

4.2 The Unity of Heaven and Humanity: The Pre-Qin Confucian Scholars' Philosophical Foundation for Environmental Ethics

From the viewpoint of environmental ethics, the concept of unity of Heaven and Humanity can be understood as the relationship between human beings and the ecosystem. Anthropocentrism overemphasizes human subjectivity and views environmental resources as extrinsic values subordinated to human agency. Contemporary environmental ethics tries to think beyond the subordinate opposition of human and nature in the Western tradition and tries to find a way for them to coexist harmoniously. Echoing the concept of the unity of Heaven and Humanity, pre-Qin Confucian scholars thought human beings have a close and harmonious relationship with nature (prior to the exploitative position of particular human agents). This concept can make an important contribution to environmentalism's intellectual projects.

Even though the unity of Heaven and Humanity as a philosophical concept had not been formally articulated yet by pre-Qin Confucian scholars, we can observe from their perception of the relationships between the Heaven and Humanity that they surely held this idea.

Before Confucius, only the ruling class held the concept of Heaven as a symbol of morality. Confucius, however, extended this Zhou culture concept to the level of the individual and brought up the question: what is the foundation for human morality? Confucius concluded that the source of moral value is rooted in the Heaven, and thus he said, "Heaven produced the virtue that is in me."[15] This means Confucius believed human morality originates from Heaven, and so it cannot be removed by anyone else. What Confucius implied here, even though not clearly

[15] "Shu Er" chapter of the *Lunyu* (*The Analects,* this translation used below as reference)

expressed, is the idea of "Knowing his own nature, he knows Heaven's," which was articulated later in the *Zhongyong* and the *Mengzi*. They explained communication between Human Nature and Heaven as a two-way street. On the one hand, the nature of human beings and all the things are dictated by Heaven. Therefore *Zhongyong* says: "What Heaven has conferred is called nature."[16] On the other hand, one is able to know his nature by exerting his mind to the utmost, and, once focused on human nature, he "knows Heaven."[17] It should be noted that in the *Zhongyong* and the *Mengzi*, the premise for "exerting one's mind to the utmost" and "giving full development to one's nature" is that human nature is good. In other words, the unity of Heaven and Humanity can only be achieved through one's awareness on the good nature of the self. Why should this be so? The answer comes from what Confucian scholars perceived as a fundamental difference between the nature of human beings and that of other creatures.

Heaven and Earth extend their supreme virtue of production and reproduction to all the things, so "Heaven-conferred nature" is not exclusive to human beings; it extends to all the creatures: "Heaven gives shape to human beings, and bestows laws on every part of nature."[18] From this point of view, human beings and all creatures share the same origin. What differentiates human beings and other creatures is the difference between their natures. Since all creatures exist and behave following the way of nature and the way of Heaven, there is no such problem as not unifying with Heaven. Because human beings have intelligence as well as selfish intentions and selfish desires, however, they are different from other creatures. If their "selfishness" cannot be checked, human beings can stray from their innate goodness, deviating from righteousness and the way of Heaven. Therefore, human nature in its full meaning can only be completed through returning to the way of Heaven. Mencius asserts that human beings possess innate goodness but he did not deny that they also have desires. Thus he said: "For the mouth to desire sweet tastes, the eye to desire beautiful colors, the ear to desire pleasant sounds, the nose to desire fragrant odors, and the four limbs to desire ease and rest—are all natural. But there is the appointment of Heaven in connection with them, and the superior man does not say of his pursuit of them, 'It is my nature'."[19] Other than natural desires, Heaven also confers the innate goodness to human beings. A human is defined by his innate goodness, not his desires. The only way to revert to one's original nature is to restore his innate goodness and control his selfishness. In this way, a Confucian moral subject confronts his desires having consciousness of the Mandate of Heaven: "There is the appointment of Heaven in connection with them, and the superior man does not say of his pursuit of them, 'It is my nature'."

What is the connection in Confucianism between environmental ethics and the unity of Heaven and Humanity brought about by the perfection of human character?

---

[16] *Zhongyong* (*The Mean*)

[17] "Jin Xin" *Mengzi* (*The Mencius*)

[18] The Guodian Chu Tomb Bamboo Slips; see "Yu Cong III" (miscellaneous sayings) in Li, Ling (2007).

[19] "Jin Xin II" chapter in *Mengzi*

The unity of Heaven and Humanity can provide Confucian environmental ethics with a foundation for philosophical reflection:

1. The unity of Heaven and Humanity ushers in a way for human introspection for the establishment of the environmental ethics

   The unity of Heaven and Humanity is not only a way to cultivate moral character. Thoughts on human nature are directly related to people's norm of behavior in a social community. In the ecosystem, since the Heaven shapes and dictates the natures for all the species universally, the concept of the unity of Heaven and humanity is necessarily related to the ethics that regulates human beings and all the creatures.

   The ethics of human society are developing with a deepening introspection by humanity. The very existence of the problem of prejudice, such as racial and gender discrimination, reveals that the ethics of human society can only be perfected after thorough introspection of the concept of equality. As a way for Confucians to conceive of all humanity, the unity of Heaven and Humanity implies the recognition of the common origin of human beings and other creatures of the Earth. The idea of Heaven-conferred human nature suggests that all human beings are born equal. The *Zhongyong*'s assertion "What Heaven has conferred is called The Nature"[20] signifies human beings should coexist with all the other creatures equally, and this kind of equality demands an ethical relationship between them. This is just what today's environmental ethics tries to promote. As for Confucianism, this is also an inevitable demand from the concept of the unity of Heaven and Humanity.
2. The unity of Heaven and Humanity creates a common ground of values for the environmental ethics

   Confucian environmental ethics is based on the belief of the common origin of the nature of human beings and all the other creatures, and Heaven and Earth that create all the creatures are believed to be the source of all the values. But why are Heaven and Earth the source of all the values?

   The sun, the moon, and stars are attached to Heaven; mountains, rivers, and all the things are kindly supported by the Earth. Therefore, mountains and rivers are able to nurture all the creatures. As mentioned in the *Zhongyong*, "The way of Heaven and Earth may be completely declared in one sentence. They are without any duality, and so they produce things in a manner that is unfathomable." Heaven and Earth are "without any duality"; hence they are with "constant utmost sincerity." That is to say, completely selfless with utmost sincerity, the Heaven and Earth produce things without break. Confucian scholars see in this spirit as an utmost and supreme virtue of creation and procreation, i.e., the "way of Heaven and Earth." Now that the Heaven and Earth create all the things with this spirit, do all the creatures created by them obey the Way? This is self-evident for Confucian scholars, because Heaven represents the reason for ethical obligation. In fact, all the other creatures simply follow their instincts. Unlike human

[20] *Zhongyong*

beings, they do not have selfish intentions, so for them there is no question of disobeying the way of Heaven. Only human beings are capable to understand the way of Heaven as well as to do things against it. Mencius said, "All things are already complete in us. There is no greater delight than to be conscious of sincerity on self-examination."[21] If one can be "conscious of sincerity on self-examination," he is able to "exhaust his humanity" as well as to "exhaust the natures of all the other creatures," and then he will understand the innate goodness that makes human a human is originated from the Heaven and Earth, so as the natures of all the other creatures. Following the logic of unity of Heaven and Humanity in pre-Qin Confucianism and the shared understanding that human beings and all the other creatures have common origin, Confucian scholars in later period conclude that "all people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are of my kind"[22] and "benevolence means the unity of all things under heaven."[23] Only by doing so is it possible for human beings to be benevolent and kind to all the creatures and to believe all things between Heaven and Earth have blood ties with each other. Based on the consensus of a common source of values, Confucian environmental ethics can conceive of an ecological community as a symbiotic biome.

3. The unity of Heaven and Humanity establishes a basis for human beings to undertake the duty and responsibility to the environment

   Human beings use natural resources in a very different way from animals and plants. Humans not only want to meet basic survival needs but also aspire to more secure states of life. The role human beings play in an ecosystem is the least vital, and yet it is the most destructive. From the intellectual resources of Confucian ethics, different deontologies of the natural world can come into conception.

   From the viewpoint of Confucian scholars, human beings are superior to all other creatures, as only they can apprehend the divine origins they share with other beings, but that does not mean an individual's realization of this can enable him to complete his human nature and express the reason of Heaven. Nor does it mean to elevate himself to the level of Heaven. On the contrary, once he achieves that, concern for the rest of creation imbues him. The "Yue Ji" reads:

   "It belongs to the nature of man, as from Heaven, to be still at his birth. His activity shows itself as he is acted on by external things, and develops the desires incident to his nature. Things come to him more and more, and his knowledge is increased. Then arise the manifestations of liking and disliking. When these are not regulated by anything within, and growing knowledge leads more astray without, he cannot come back to himself, and his Heavenly principle is extinguished. Now there is no end of the things by which man is affected; and when his likes and dislikes are not subject to regulation (from within), he is changed into the nature of things as they come before him."

[21] "Jin Xin I" chapter in *Mengzi*

[22] Zhang Zai (1020–1077), *Xi Ming*

[23] *Er Cheng Yishu* (Collected writings of Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi), Book 2, Part 1

Here "desire" (*renyu*) refers to human selfishness. A human is superior to all other creatures not because he can use his intelligence to fulfill the selfish desires. On the contrary, since a human is able to understand his nature and knows Heaven, he should examine the origin of his nature more deeply. Even though the human is intelligent, he is only one individual among numerous individuals. Human beings should deeply regret the damages caused by the indulgence of their desires and try their best to be rational and to restrain themselves when they consume the natural resources. The "Li Qi" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads: "What any season does not produce, what any soil does not nourish, will not be used by a superior man in performing his rites."[24] So, to fulfill human's selfish desires by abusing the ecosystem is firmly opposed by Confucian scholars. If the human is the highest realization of the goodness of the Heaven and Earth, then there is definitely no reason to violate the ecosystem's law of creation and procreation that generates the human himself.

4.3 Be Benevolent to People and Kind to Creatures: Pre-Qin Confucian Scholars' Value Judgments in Environmental Ethics

Environmental ethics are related to our value judgments of the ecosystem and its inhabitants. For a long time, "value" has been a concept attached to human subjectivity. An object does not have any intrinsic value; its value is determined by its utility to the subject. The emergence of the environmental ethics makes it necessary to rethink this issue. Environmental ethicists, however, have achieved no consensus on the matter. Some scholars, such as Baird Callicott (1992), think that nature has intrinsic value. Nevertheless, these values cannot exist independently without the subject because they are derived from the subject. Other scholars, however, such as Holmes Rolston, who strongly assert nature itself contains objective values, oppose this view. For the later, the "intrinsic value" mentioned by the former is simply a "projection" from the subject, thus cannot be considered as the real intrinsic value of its nature (Rolston et al. 2000). What position do the Confucian scholars take to deal with this question?

As explained above, Confucian scholars assert that ecosystems have objective innate value. There is no doubt that humans beings and things have their own characters. With regard to the objectivity of values, the Confucian ideas are similar to but not entirely congruent with Rolston's argument, for the latter limits innate value to organic species on the grounds that only organic species which have evolved genetics are thus [endowed with] an "evaluating system" (pingjia xitong). In other words, organic species have intrinsic values because they themselves are evaluating "subjectivities" in the first place. This line of argument suggests that Rolston, like

[24] "Li Qi" chapter in *The Classic of Rites*

Callicot, has only widened the definition of subjectivity but not altogether dispensed with it. In this respect, Confucian scholars have a different perspective. Their value judgment of the ecosystem is based on the assumption that Heaven and Earth bestow upon the myriad of things with forms and order their propensities. It is in the perpetual process of "continuous productivity" that the myriad of things are endowed with "forms" and "propensities." This endowment is universal and indiscriminate. Differences are attributed only to the yin or the yang as the principles of creation. Based on the universality of the endowment of "form" and "propensity," it can be said that value is not limited to living organisms. The myriad things and human beings both have objective intrinsic values. Therefore, the Confucian view of creation by Heaven and Earth is a kind of value ontology.

Although the Heaven and Earth create both human beings and the myriad things, there is a fundamental difference between them. "Man is [the product of] the attributes of Heaven and Earth, [by] the interaction of the dual forces of nature, the union of the animal and intelligent [souls], and the finest subtle matter of the five elements."[25] [Among all creatures], human beings have received the best gifts from Heaven and Earth and represent the highest accomplishment of the ecosystem's creation of values. Animals, like human beings, also have relationships among themselves, but they are unable to conceive of ethics. Human beings, by contrast, have left behind the primordial phase of undifferentiated self and other. As a result, the Way of Humanity [i.e., ethics] emerges as a branch of the Way of Heaven: "(Shun) clearly understood the multitude of things, and closely observed it relationship to humanity." Based on this fundamental difference, pre-Qin Confucian scholars argued for distinction among human beings and things. Accordingly, the ethics applied to them are different.

Mencius says, "In regard to inferior creatures, the superior man is kind to them, but not loving. In regard to people generally, he is loving, but not affectionate. He is affectionate to his parents, and lovingly disposed to people generally. He is lovingly disposed to people generally, and kind to creatures."[26] For Confucian scholars, "benevolence" and "care" are two different notions. The former is reserved for human-to-human relations; that is, one can extend benevolence from oneself to others, and hence ideas such as "Treat your elders as elders, so that the elders of others shall be similarly treated; Treat your children as children, so that the children of others shall be similarly treated." "Care," on the other hand, is reserved for the relations between humans and things. It is a human-centered idea based on the assumption that human beings and things are of the same origin. From one's family to other people and from other people to the myriad of things, distance gradually increases in the manifestation of benevolence and care. But instead of an indicator of decreasing importance, the distance merely suggests a difference in the ways and levels of [engagement].

Regarding the nature of relationships, benevolence and care are given well-demarcated definitions by Confucian scholars. Human-to-human relationships and

[25] "Li Yun" chapter of *The Classic of Rites*

[26] "Jin Xin I" chapter in *Mengzi*

human-to-thing relationships are different in their essence; hence, they should be treated differently: "Their diverse manifestations are not the same, therefore the [kind of love] one shows cannot but have different levels; that is to say, the principle is one but its manifestations are diverse."[27] The tenor of this quote is unequivocal: "One can care about the myriad of things, but do not deal with them in the same way as dealing with other human beings." In the "Xiang Dang" chapter of *The Analects*, we find the following anecdote: "The stable had been burned down when he was attending court; on his return he asked, 'Has any man been hurt?' He did not ask about the horses." Zheng Xuan's comment on this passage is "people first and livestock second." When considering the human-to-human relationship with human-to-thing relationship, the humanistic Confucian scholars always put the former first. Yet it would be hasty to come to the conclusion that Confucius did not care about animals, for "livestock second" is only relative to "people first." As Zhu Xi commented: "This is not to say he does not love the horses; he did not have the leisure to ask." Obviously, under these circumstances, the Confucian view is better understood as "one cannot [truly] care about things if one does not love other human beings." Critical matters require immediate attention; less important matters can be temporarily put aside. It is not the action of a benevolent person to treat the two alike.

In fact, Confucian scholars do care about the myriad of things and this care is defined by the intrinsic value of the things. This is because the intrinsic values of the myriad of things are the same as those of human beings—Heaven and Earth bestows both. Mencius once said: "When people see the bare and lifeless [appearance of] the Niu Mountain, they assume that it was never wooded. But Mountain Niu, nourished by the rain of Heaven and dew of Earth, was once beautiful. This beauty is the intrinsic value specific to Mountain Niu that was lost because day and night cattle and goats pastured on it, and humans came to fell the trees." Mencius's account of the misfortune of Mountain Niu here is a parable on the [imperative] of cultivating human nature. But his description of the misfortune of Mountain Niu highlights its "nature." Originally, Mountain Niu was beautiful because Heaven and Earth nourished its nature. Once its nature was destroyed, so was its beauty. Therefore, the intrinsic value of Mountain Niu lies in its "nature."

Confucian scholars' care for animals is deeply rooted in an affirmation of the latter's intrinsic value of having life. Xunzi once said: "Fire and water possess vital breath but have no life. Plants and trees possess life, but lack awareness. Birds and beasts have awareness, but lack a sense of morality and justice. Human possess vital breath, life, and awareness, and also a sense of morality and justice. It is for this reason that they are the noblest beings in the world." In Xunzi's account, there is a hierarchy of intrinsic values [that encompasses all creatures]. From the lowest to the

[27] A quotation from Yang Shi (1053–1135) in Zhu Xi (1130–1200), *Collected Annotations on Mencius*, Book VII

highest, we see a progression from inorganic entities to organisms, plants, animals, and eventually to human beings. In this progression of values, animals are next to human beings, and their endowed intrinsic values are second only to the latter. Birds and primates, although outstripped by human beings in terms of intelligence and sensibilities, do possess certain cognitive abilities and have developed feelings of empathy toward what is specific to them. In this regard, they have exceeded all other species. Mencius once said: "It is the nature of things to be of unequal quality." Because of the extreme difference among the myriad things in terms of their intrinsic values, one should care for them in different ways.

Since animals have advanced cognitive abilities, they earned more empathy from pre-Qin Confucian scholars. The Mencius chapter entitled "King Hui of Liang I" records the following anecdote: When King Xuan of Qi saw an ox being led away for the ceremony of Xun Zhong (consecrating the bell with an ox's blood), "a sense of commiseration" was aroused by a vision that the ox trembles in fear while being butchered. This sense of "commiseration" is what Mencius calls the source of benevolence. Despite the fact that the notion of being "unable to bear" (*buren*) describes a reaction to suffering animals and human beings alike, the two reactions are essentially different, although not at odds with one another. Such is the natural extension of the heart of benevolence; being *buren* toward humans triggers "treating the people with benevolence"; being *buren* toward animals is by contrast triggers "caring for things" (*aiwu*). Of course, when examined critically, King Xuan of Qi's compassion for animals has two implications. First, mankind has the single moral subjectivity in the world. From a humanistic point of view, killing is not an act of human kindness. An encounter with animal suffering inevitably triggers self-reflection on morality. King Xuan of Qi's heart of *buren* contains elements of self-reflection on morality. Second, rather than existing merely as instrumentals, animals do possess intrinsic value, as suggested by the fact that they are capable of feeling pain. That King Xuan of Qi dismissed frugality as the rationale behind [his decision] to substitute an ox with a goat precisely demonstrates the point that for him, an ox has more than just instrumental values. His feeling of commiseration for the suffering of the animal implies his acknowledgment of animals' intrinsic value of life.

From this point of view, sayings like "The Master [Confucius] angled, but did not use a net. He shot, but not at perching birds" can also be seen as pre-Qin Confucian scholars' statement for environmental protection, not merely an instrumental value of "people-oriented utilitarianism." The edifice of the Confucian eco-ethics is built upon the acknowledgment that the myriad things and myself share a common origin. While Confucian scholars made use of nature on the grounds that it has instrumental value, they do not overlook nature's intrinsic value. The Confucian way of dealing with things has three components, namely, "people-oriented utilitarianism," "caring for things," and "make the most out of things according to their character."

4.4 Institutionalizing *Li* (Rites) and *Yue* (Music): Pre-Qin Confucian Scholars' Environmental Protection Strategies

Many environment-related rituals envisioned by Confucian scholars carried on the legacy of the early Zhou Dynasty. Through a reading of the many descriptions in *The Book of Rites* and *The Rites of Zhou*, Confucian scholars believed that the Zhou court had set up a specific government bureau in charge of natural resources. In addition to the four seasons, *The Book of Rites* further divides each season into three periods: Meng (the first lunar month of the season), Zhong (the second lunar month of the season), and Ji (the third lunar month of the season). The chapter titled "Proceedings of Government in the Different Months" stipulates the rites, agricultural activities, utilization of resources, and decrees specific to each season and period, which were to be implemented by various authorities. Many official titles and appellations recorded in *The Rites of Zhou* such as Shan Yu, Lin Heng, Chuan Heng, and Ze Yu are related to environmental protection. Their designated duties are fully described in *The Rites of Zhou*. For example:

> Shan Yu (supervisor of forestry and hunting) is in charge of regulating forestry, demarcating the boundaries between natural resources and imposing restrictions to protect forests. In the middle of the winter, it is allowed to cut trees on the south side of mountains. In the middle of the summer, it is only allowed to cut trees on the north side of mountains. For making cart axles or plows, it is only allowed to cut the smaller trees. All the subject people should follow the order to cut trees during the prescribed period.

This is a detailed account of the jurisdiction and season-specific management of Shan Yu. It is true that some accounts in *The Book of Rites* and *The Rites of Zhou* seem to be imaginary, but the two books did preserve some valuable information apropos the history of ancient institutions, which is not necessarily fictional.

To arrange agricultural activities and government affairs according to the four seasons is in accordance with the long tradition of the primordial thought of "mankind models itself on Heaven and Earth" in ancient times. Another example is found in "The Discourses of Lu" in the *Guoyu*:

> In the old days, after the cold winter had past and all creatures awoke from their slumber underground, Shui Yu (supervisor of water and fishing) guided people to catch big fishes, turtles and clams in the rivers with large nets and bamboo fishing baskets, and offered the fishing yields to the ancestral shrine. This policy was executed all over the country in order to let the earth release its energy.

Shui Yu here refers to an ancient office title with a long history. The Shui Yu is in charge of many environment-related affairs, including the multiplying, growing, and hunting of birds, beasts, fish, and insects. During the spring and autumn period, Guan Zhong, who was commissioned by Duke Xuan of Qi to create a new bureaucratic system, also proposed that "for each swamp, establish three bureaus of Yu; for each mountain, establish three bureaus of Heng." These examples illustrate that in the pre-Qin period, specific authorities had been established to protect and manage natural resources. These agencies had long histories of their own.

Of course, the conventions developed for environment protection in *The Book of Rites* and *The Rites of Zhou* did not simply copy ancient bureaucratic systems, rituals, and laws. They are inseparable from the pre-Qin Confucian scholars' in-depth view of the relationship between Heaven and Earth (i.e., the ecosystem) and ceremonies and music. The "Yue Ling" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads:

> (In the second month of spring) they keep both the young buds and those of more advanced growth from being disturbed; they nourish both the young animals and those not fully grown…. (In the second month of spring) (the fishermen) should not let the streams and meres run dry, nor drain off all the water from the dams and ponds, (in order to catch all the fish), nor should (the hunters) fire the hills and forests…. (In the first month of summer), what is long should be encouraged to grow longer, and what is high to grow higher. There should be no injuring or toppling of anything; no commencing of works in the earth; no sending forth of great multitudes (on expeditions); no cutting down of large trees.

The "Ji Yi" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads: "Trees are felled and animals killed (only) during the proper season." Mencius and Xunzi also make similar assertions. From here, we can draw three important Confucian points for protecting environmental resources through rites: (a) continuous logging and hunting are prohibited; (b) small trees and infant animals should be protected; (3) exploit nature only during the proper season.

Mencius and Xunzi also made similar statements. Through an examination of these passages, we come to the conclusion that there were three key components in the Confucian scholars' approach to protecting natural resources through *li* (ritual propriety): (1) forbidding tree felling and overhunting, (2) protecting younger animal, and (3) emphasizing the importance of "season." [Of the three], the first is easy to comprehend—excessive tree felling and overhunting violate the principle of "creation and procreation" sanctioned by Heaven and Earth. The second had much to do with the idea of "nourishment" (*yang*), which was of great importance for Confucian scholars. Heaven and Earth do not simply give birth to myriad things; they also nourish them. This is the Heavenly Way as it has always been—Heaven and Earth nourish the myriad things. The *Kun* hexagram represents Earth. All things receive from it their fullest nourishment. The newly born are vulnerable; therefore, without special care, they cannot successfully grow to maturity. The "Xu Gua" chapter (The Hexagrams in Sequence) of the *Book of Changes* reads: "When (things) are so produced, they are sure to be in an undeveloped condition." Hence Tun is followed by Meng. Meng is descriptive of what is undeveloped—the young of creatures and things. Those in that state require nourishment. Hence Xu follows Meng. Xu is descriptive of the way in which meat and drink (come to be supplied). The term *yinshi* (eating and drinking) here does not denote a specifically human activity. The [proper] way of "eating and drinking" (*yinshi zhi dao*) sanctioned by Heaven and Earth is applicable to all creatures. Therefore, Confucian scholars particularly opposed any intrusion during springs and summers into [the habitats formed by] rivers, swamps, woods, and mountains, so to not disturb the ecosystem during the phases of reproduction and nourishment. The doctrine underscoring "the importance of the right season" is closely connected to the idea that regulating according to seasons and seasonal segments or solar terms and stresses "the

importance of nourishment" for the reproduction and nourishment of the myriad things. The growth of the myriad things depends on whether or not the laws of nature are obeyed.

It is of great significance that Confucian scholars contemplated the issue of environmental protection from the perspective of ritual propriety. Many of their proposals were codified into the law during subsequent generations. They thus have contributed to the protection of natural resources. For example, laws and regulations concerning environmental protection are found in "The Statutes on Agriculture" (*tianlü*) recorded on the *Yunmeng County Qin-Dynasty Bamboo Slips*[28] and "The Imperial Edict of Monthly Ordinances of the Four Seasons in Fifty Articles Delivered by Envoys and Inspectors of the Han dynasty."[29] All of them resemble the proclamations in the "Monthly Ordinances" of *The Book of Rites*.

So why did pre-Qin Confucian scholars regulate the relationship between mankind and the ecosystem by means of the Way of Rites and Music? Pre-Qin Confucian scholars believed that rites and music were developed out of the sacred Heavenly Way, as it is mankind's response to the stimulus of the spirit of Heaven and Earth: "Sages composed music to respond to Heaven, and created rites to act in accordance with Earth." Indeed, rites and music constituted an important medium through which man have communion with the spirit of Heaven and Earth, for they are one with the latter: "Rites and music are invested with the sentiment (*qing*) of Heaven and Earth, and they convey the power (or virtue) *De* of the transcendent and the luminaries." Apparently, the creation of the myriad things by Heaven and Earth is characterized by harmony, which is also the essence of Confucian rites and music. *The Analects* states: "In practicing the rules of propriety, it is harmony that is to be prized." Harmony is the essence of rites and music as well as the creative spirit of Heaven and Earth. Regulating the relationship between mankind and the ecosystem by means of rites and music attests to the Confucian scholars' compliance with the spirit of Heaven and Earth.

The influence of Confucian rites and music concerned with the natural environment manifests itself mainly through harmony. It has three dimensions:

1. [The practice of] rites and music ensures the realization of the "unity of Heaven and Humanity"

   "The unity of Heaven and Humanity" refers to the ultimate integration of the nature of humans into the nature of Heaven and Earth. It is a peaceful accord between human existence and the ecological system. Rather than an empty term to be reflected on, "the unity of Man and Heaven" demands actions which are the sine qua non for the improvement of humanity. Confucian rites and music are less exterior tokens of Chinese culture than an important means of ensuring the cultivation of humanity. Let us take Confucian rites and music concerning eating

[28] This bamboo slip document from the Qin Dynasty was discovered in 1975 in Yunmeng county, Hunan.). (Translator's note)

[29] This is a document discovered in Dunhuang in 1992, usually termed "The imperial edict of monthly ordinances for the four seasons" (四时月令诏条). (Translator's note)

and drinking as an example. Pre-Qin Confucian scholars were fastidious about dinning etiquettes because for them, human desires for food, drink, and sex are of utmost importance. This etiquette should not to be understood as merely a semiotic system related to eating and drinking. The "Yue Ji" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads: "Thus we see that the ancient kings, in their institution of ceremonies and music, did not seek to see how fully they could satisfy the gastronomic appetite and the appetites of the eyes and ears; they intended to teach the people to regulate their likes and dislikes, and to bring them back to the normative patterns of humanity." Rather than catering to basic human urges, etiquette operates so as to lead humans to the path of righteous. Confucian scholars' ideas about rites and music, which are related to environmental protection, not only complied with the laws of a creative and nourishing Heaven and Earth but also aimed at curbing human beings' animal drives. If human beings, unable to restrain their urges and desires, exploit natural resources solely to satisfy their own needs, then they are doomed to lose their true nature and lose their way.

2. Rites and music are Confucianism's religious means for the self to experience the shared origin with the Heaven and Earth

   With religious zeal, Confucian scholars venerated Heaven and Earth, which is for them the common progenitor of mankind and the myriad things. Heaven and Earth invoke awe and deserve worship because they give birth to and nourish the myriad things. Pre-Qin Confucian scholars had the conviction that all natural resources are bequeathed by Heaven and Earth; they thus sincerely esteemed [Heaven and Earth]. The "Qu Li II" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads: "In bad years, when the grain of the season is not coming to maturity, the ruler at his meals will not make the (usual) offering of the lungs [of the sacrificed animal], nor will his horses be fed on grain. His special road will not be kept clean and swept, nor when at sacrifices will his musical instruments be suspended on their stands. Great officers will not eat the large grained millet; and (other) officers will not have music (even) at their drinking." Confucian scholars insisted on special continence during bad years, so as to show understanding and gratitude to Heaven and Earth for giving birth to and nourishing the myriad things. This requires strenuous efforts by humans. The "Jiaotesheng" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads: "Therefore if the animal happened to be pregnant, the Son of Heaven did not eat of it, nor did he use such a victim in sacrificing to Heaven."[30] Even the Son of Heaven was not entitled to kill pregnant cattle for food nor for the ceremony of the "Border Sacrifice." This convention is an example of Confucian scholars' reverence for the nurturing Heaven and Earth.

3. Bringing harmony by rites and music is the basic strategy for Confucian scholars to rationalize and arrange all the things between the Heaven and the Earth:

[30] The word "di" (帝) can mean "Supreme Being" or Emperor, but in this context, according to the Eastern Han Dynasty authoritative annotator of the Confucian Classics, Zheng Xuan (郑玄), it refers to "Heaven" (天). [Translator's note]

When arranging natural resources through rites and music, pre-Qin Confucian scholars followed three guidelines:

(a) The "Li Qi" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads: "(The things used in performing) the rites should be suitable to the season, taken from the resources supplied by the ground, in accordance with (the requirements of) the spirits, and agreeable to the minds of men, according to the character of all things." In order to survive, one has to draw on natural resources. Yet he/she ought to abide by the laws of the nurturing ecosystem and act with discernment ("complying with the requirement of the spirits and agreeable to the minds of men") and continence ("suitable to the season, taken from the resources supplied by Earth). Man has no right to exhaust all natural resources to satisfy selfish desires. This is the first guideline.
(b) The "Yue Ji" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads: "Therefore, when the Great Man uses and exhibits his ceremonies and music, Heaven and Earth will in response to him by displaying their brilliant effects. They will act in happy union, and the energies (of nature), now expanding, now contracting, will proceed harmoniously. The genial airs from above and the responsive action below will spread over and nourish all things." That Confucian scholars approached environmental issues through rites and music suggests that they were fully aware of the way Heaven and Earth work ("Heaven and Earth will in response to him by displaying their brilliant effects"). Heaven and Earth play their roles in silence, yet the myriad things emerge. The most effective strategy for protecting the ecosystem is to minimize human interference, thus allowing nature to complete and suffice itself. Free from damages caused by human activities, Heaven and Earth will naturally accommodate the ceaseless reproduction and growth of the myriad things, and the world will be exuberant with life. This is the second guideline.
(c) In the "Yue Ji" of *The Classic of Rites*, it says, "When bowings and courtesies marked the government of the kingdom, then indeed there would be what might be described as music and ceremony. Violent oppression of the people would not happen; the princes would appear as submissive as guests at court; there would be no occasion for the weapons of war…In music of the grandest style there is the same harmony that prevails between Heaven and Earth; in ceremonies of the grandest form there is the same graduation that exists between Heaven and Earth. Through harmony, things do not fail (to fulfill their ends)." Instead of merely an ecological issue, the final solution to environmental problems is also a political matter, one that requires the collaboration and collective efforts of all human beings. If human beings cannot coexist in peace and the world is plagued by warfare and social turmoil, then the ideals of environmental protection would never be realized.

The Confucian conventions and conceptions have found their way into ideas nowadays about environmental protection. Many nations have developed specific institutions and legislations to protect natural resources, yet little has been done to reflect on why and how we protect them. The "Li Qi" chapter of *The Classic of Rites* reads:

> Therefore what any season does not produce, what any soil does not nourish, will not be used by a Superior Man in performing his rites, nor be enjoyed by the spirits. If mountaineers were to (seek to) use fish and turtles in their rites, or the dwellers near lakes, deer and pigs, the Superior Man would say of them that they did not know (the nature of) those usages. Therefore it is necessary to take the established revenues of a state as the great rule for its ceremonial (expenditure).

The way of the nurturing Heaven and Earth is closely related to the survival of mankind. Confucian scholars referred to this connection as "the important relationship of ritual propriety" (*lizhi dalun*). This shows that pre-Qin Confucian scholars naturally approach the relationship between mankind and ecosystem from the perspective of ethics and give attention to the special bond connecting mankind with Heaven and Earth. Rites and music therefore represent the most direct and thorough articulation of this relationship.

In sum, from the viewpoint of pre-Qin Confucian scholars, in emphasizing either the harmonious coexistence of human beings and the natural environment or the protection of the environment by rites and rituals, we cannot avoid thinking about the fundamental question of original human nature. Just as Mencius pointed out, "There are those who are great men. They rectify themselves and so others are rectified."[31] If we admit there is an ethical relationship between human beings and the natural environment, then human introspection must be the first step we take for acknowledging and confirming it. That is what we should do in response to the environmental crisis. As for environmental preservation, although the protections assured by laws and institutions are definitely indispensable, there are, strictly speaking, only means. If, in the end, there is no actual reflection on the humanity's position in nature, then whether all the laws and institutions can protect the environment effectively is in doubt.

The *Zhongyong* says: "The possessor of sincerity does not merely accomplish the self-completion of himself. With this quality he completes other men and also things." Without this "self-completion," it is impossible to "complete other men and things." The harmony between human beings and the natural environment should be based on a deep understanding of the inner relationship between them and, in our opinion, on the "metaphysical" level as well. Therefore, if we promote environmentalism, launch environmental education programs, and enact legislation merely with the goal of preserving the natural resources, our goal will not be achieved. In any period in history, the progress of ethics is based on rethinking human nature. So too does environmental ethics as a new moral paradigm. *This chapter has been translated from the Chinese by the editor*.

References

Guo, Qiyong, Zhongguo zhexue zhihui de tansuo (The Wisdom of Chinese philosophy: An exploration), Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2008

Meng, Peiyuan, Ren yu ziran: Zhongguo zhexue shengtaiguan, (Man and Nature: The Ecological perspective in Chinese Philosophy) Beijing, People's Press, 2004

[31] "Jin Xin I" chapter of *Mengzi*.

Rolston, Holmes. *Huanjing lunli xue*. (Environmental Ethics). Yang Tongjin, translator. Beijing, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2000.

Wang Xingxian. Xunzi jijie, (Collected Commentaries on Xunzi) Beijing, Zhonghua Books, 1988

Zhu Xi. Sishu wujing. (The four books and five classics). Beijing: China Bookstore, 1985

Zheng Xuan, annotator, and Kong Yingda, commentator. Liji zhengyi (Notes and commentaries on the Book of Rites) in Shisanjing zhushu. (Notes and commentaries on the Thirteen Classics). Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Press, 1997

Li, Ling, *Reading Notes on the Guodian Bamboo Scripts of Chu*, Beijing: The Chinese Academy of Sciences Press, 2007: 192

J.Baird Callicott, *Rolston on Intrinsic Value: A Deconstruction, Environmental Ethics* 14, 1992, pp. 129–143

Rolston, Holmes, Yang, Tong jin, trans., *Huanjing lunlixue* (Environmental Ethics), Beijing: Chinese Academy of Sciences Press, 2000:152–159

Part II
Confucianism in the Contemporary World of Action

Chapter 5
Building a Loho Homeland with Traditional Wisdom

Liao Xiaoyi

I have been a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy at Sichuan University, a research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and a producer of environmental protection programs at China Central Television. In 1996, I established the nongovernmental environmental protection organization [NGO] the "Global Village of Beijing." In 2000, I began a gradual spiritual return to Chinese culture. Since then I have endeavored to address human-caused environmental problems based upon the East [Asian] philosophy of "Unity of Heaven and Man" to develop a rational blueprint for the "Loho (乐和 一 (乐和) Happy and Harmonious) Homeland."

In 2008, I led my Global Village of Beijing team to participate in the reconstruction efforts following the northern Sichuan earthquake. Together with volunteers and local villagers, we turned our blueprint into a prototype village. In 2010, I returned to my hometown in Wuxi County (巫溪县) in Chongqing and was invited by the local government to share the Loho experience and to participate in building the county into a Loho Homeland. We began with traditional Chinese wisdom and from it found the spiritual power to rebuild an environmentally sound village and built together a social governance model led by the government and with participation from many groups. We also trained a group of social workers to spread the idea of Loho and help build the Loho Homeland. I now share some of my reflections as an activist in this effort.

L. Xiaoyi (✉)
Global Village of Beijing, Beijing, China
e-mail: sheriliao@yahoo.com

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd
and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*,
China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_5

5.1 The Loho Homeland Project Revitalized Rural Culture

"Loho" is a locally generated, traditionally rooted, and reality-based idea and discourse. The original meaning of "Loho" is to be joyful in the Way, to pursue harmony, to keep one's body and mind in harmony, and to be joyful in harmony and equilibrium. For Daoists, "Harmony is the constant [way of life]," and one who knows harmony is enlightened and "all things leave behind them the obscurity [out of which they have come], and go forward to embrace the brightness [into which they have emerged], while they are harmonized by the breath of vacancy" (for Confucians, "harmony is the universal path which all should pursue"). Harmony is the Way described by Liang Shuming (1893–1988) as "the immense life of the universe" which is a diverse, balanced, and symbiotic life community. Loho harmonizes the individual and the collective, righteousness and profit, body and mind, emotion and intellect, and the self and others in order to achieve harmony and happiness in life, as well as to remedy the rifts between individuals and the collective, righteousness and private benefit, the body and the mind, feelings and intellect, and humans and the environment, as well as the accompanying crisis caused by the modern analytical modes of thinking.

The principle of Loho is not only a philosophical outlook and methodology but also a transplantable model and a practical procedure composed of a cluster of policies including Loho governance, Loho economy, Loho housing, Loho etiquette, and the Loho health regimen. It is a general plan that is able to preserve villages, farms, hospitals, schools, and marketplaces and at the same time develop environmentally friendly agriculture, an elderly care system, a health system, and creative handicrafts. This kind of plan and model can be understood as a way of development in the modern context, with an aim not to destroy but to build villages, a rural urbanization which achieves a symbiosis of city and country. It aims to produce a new rural environmental civilization which pursues a harmony between body, mind, and environment as well as between heaven, earth, and humanity. If "Loho" is taken as the motivating spirit, then "home" points to social connections, and "land" refers to the real natural environment and the physical space; thus, the term "Loho Homeland" suggests that all the things in the universe are in one family with all creatures living together. Loho arouses the benevolent feelings of love deep down in people's hearts, to love all creatures, to love other people, and to love themselves, and encourages people to rely on each other, tolerate each other, be grateful to each other, and help each other. As such, it forms the basis for a fundamental consensus between the government, social organizations, and the daily lives of the people. It is a calling from the earth's community of life.

In this multicultural age, it is not easy to find a language that connects with both the traditional and the modern and at the same time is approved of by the government, recognized by society at large, and accepted by average people. Loho is such a language, and it brims with energy and depth. To express the meaning of Loho for the daily lives of average people, it is Loho governance, Loho economy, Loho housing, Loho etiquette, and the Loho health regimen. To explain Loho from a socialist

perspective, it is a type of joint social governance, a joint mutually beneficial economy, a commonly shared valuing of life, cultural pluralism, and coexistence with the environment. Interpreting Loho as an ideal for an ecologically based civilization, it can be thought of as a socio-ecological institution, promoting environmentally sound economic development, natural heath care, environmental ethics, and natural environmental management. In the language of Liang Shuming's ideal of rural culture, Loho means having "a strong determination to uplift oneself" and "deep affection for others." To spread Loho ideas with the language of social work, it is "establishing a public spirit, relying on conscience, keeping integrity, fulfilling duty, and giving love." To understand Loho in the words of the residents of Yangqiao village, "Loho is to be as one family" and "Loho is to be united together." These are sentiments which can be comprehended, remembered, and accepted by everyone. A Loho representative from Daping village once told a *Farmers' Daily* reporter, "Don't talk about other things we don't understand. When you say Loho, everything is clear. It's a good thing. Let's do it!"

The idea of the Loho spirit is closely connected with education and guidance. The Wuxi County government has set up a training system which includes the Communist cadre school, public schools, Loho academies, township-level Loho training centers, and village-level Loho compounds. Together they form an edifice for cultural education. We provide an educational curriculum and methods of instruction as well as the planning and hosting of activities. Each Loho Homeland pilot village has a Loho compound for use as a public space for community activities; each township has a Loho training center which regularly offers training programs; each village has a Loho Wall, a bulletin board for villagers to check information anytime, and the entrance of each village has a Loho Placard which honors people in the community, which everyone takes quite seriously. Regularly scheduled and informal Loho guidance meetings have been an indispensable element of villagers' spiritual lives. We have composed songs expressing Loho ideas, and these have become tunes to which villagers like to listen and sing. We also promote Loho etiquette, such as the proper and polite hand-wave salutation, how to clap politely, the traditional cupped-hand salute, proper bowing, the kowtow, and so on, in order to revitalize the custom of good manners in the countryside. Starting from teaching children the *Standards for Being a Good Pupil and Child* (弟子规 *Dizi Gui*) and *The Three Character Classic* (三字经 *San Zi Jing*), by reading the classics, we bring the heritage of traditional literary culture back to the countryside. A major cultural event in establishing a Loho Homeland in Wuxi in 2011 was the launching of a countywide movement on "The Accessible Analects" and "Everyone Study the Confucian Classics."

In the summer of 2011, we organized local villagers to form a Wuxi Confucian Classics Study Group to attend an Analects learning activity in the Wang Caigui Confucian Classics Study Center. The 33 members of the Study Group, from villagers to teachers, comprised of ages from 15-year-old youngsters to elders in their 70s, all studied the Classics from five in the morning until nine thirty at night every day for an entire month. They read the Classics with real enthusiasm and gained wisdom. A woman with a gambling addiction confessed that she used to think of

herself as a criminal, but studying the Confucian Classics gave her the confidence to become an upright person. She swore to quit using illegal drugs and to become a "Chinese person with wisdom." Another villager began wearing traditional Chinese clothing because, he explained, "it makes me feel closer to the ancient sages." The Study Group gives public recitations of the Classics in their own Wuxi accent, traveling as far as Beijing, where local people, including those from Tsinghua and Beijing Universities, have regarded their delivery as "confident" and "done with ease." This confidence and sense of ease blew the superficiality and anxiety of today's world like a fresh breeze and comforted people like a soothing balm and surprised and moved every person in the audience. The call "to be gentleman" and "to be Chinese person with wisdom" rang out like a resonant voice issuing forth from deep in the mountains and immediately produced an enthusiastic response.

In this age of crass materialism, the power of ideas is often overlooked. In the practice of our own work, however, we can continuously feel the power of the Loho ideas, and we are thus moved to continuously improve and refine Loho principles and the methods of Loho education and guidance.

Loho's power is the power of tradition. In contrast to the superficiality and anxiety of modern life, tradition is rooted deep within people's hearts, and it needs to be awakened. One villager said, "Loho is returning to the root." That root is cultural self-awareness, which is a nation's understanding and recognition of its spiritual homeland. In the long river of history, only the Chinese nation enjoys 5,000 years of uninterrupted history, because the common values of that nation—such as filial piety, honesty, sincerity, trust, benevolence, justice, courtesy, and wisdom—were commonly shared from the royal court to the grass roots of society and from the literati to the peasants, as basic values. When the common values which have maintained the survival of the people decline and disappear, confusion, uncertainty about life's goals, social conflict, environmental deterioration, economic imbalances, and so on inevitably follow. Loho awakens the tradition of finding joy in harmony and peace which resides in people's hearts, it awakens their cultural self-awareness, and that allows us to see the possibility for the revival of Chinese nation coming from the rural areas.

Loho's power is the power of the rural grass roots. The fundamental underlying cause of rural problems is that rural values are denied by modernity. Therefore, together with cultural self-awareness, it is also very important to build rural people's confidence in their traditional values. At one time every village was a true community. Communal consciousness and its appeal among the people, though assaulted by modernity, have not yet vanished completely. I once asked the coordinator of the Third Cooperative in my hometown of Yangqiao why he wanted to participate in the Loho movement, and he replied, "Because Loho is good." I asked him why Loho is good, and he answered, "Before the Loho movement, people were only concerned with themselves, but now everyone feels as close to one another as though we're all eating from the same big pot. I don't see anything wrong with that!" In the past villagers helped and looked after one another. They still need the idea of everyone being in the same family and an all-inclusive family-like society. We have made a point to protect and defend the "one big family" core cultural value, as well as the

traditional virtues of filial piety, honesty, benevolence, and frugality. We made villagers realize that these grassroots rural values are treasures for helping urban dwellers "alleviate spiritual poverty." We frequently help villagers to recognize the environmentally friendly nature of their own lifestyle and the downsides of the urban lifestyle such that they can understand what constitutes a real high-quality life. To express it in "more profound terms," the future hope for an environmentally sound civilization lies in the countryside. The rural areas have not yet been covered over by steel and cement; rural culture has not yet disappeared, so it is still possible to create a sound ecosystem along with dwelling houses, healthcare, rural culture industries, and local rural social autonomy. In fact, villagers know more about what a real quality life is and the meaning of environmentally sound civilization than many urban intellectuals.

The power of Loho is the power of spirit. Assaulted by modern materialism, the countryside has been affected by the idea of putting money above all else. Deep down in people's hearts, however, the desire for a spiritual life has never died away. Chairman Chen of the Loho Mutual Help Group at Sanbao village said, "If we were to describe the 30 years of China's economic reforms in one word, it would be this: money! How could our society not be in chaos? The idea of Loho Homeland teaches people that if people stop thinking of everything in terms of money, then the social atmosphere will improve." Those simple villagers know better than many people enslaved by materialism that the significance of a good asocial ethos for individual lives is not just about the security of the society, but about the deep-rooted beauty and tenderness of life and its meaning. Villagers talk about the Five Hearts of Loho and sing about them in songs: "Erecting the heart of justice, depending on the heart of conscience, keeping the heart of truth, fulfilling the heart of filial piety, nourishing the heart of love." Villagers know those hearts are the most valuable kind of wealth. Loho lets villages rediscover the power of human dignity once they had. After participating in the Loho Homeland public services and being appraised as the Loho representatives for their good deeds, people who once felt ashamed in the village because they didn't make big money are proud of themselves and respected by other people. While many people crowded into the city are engaged in bitter competition for material goods, our villagers, because of their capacity endowed by the traditional culture to realize and practice the fullness of human nature, have awakened their own reason and the appeals for human dignity, and they found there is room for self-fulfillment and thus generated one Loho story and another Loho story. This kind of spirit is essentially an ethics rather than a religion. This is how the rationality of Confucianism, which surpasses the power of religion, reveals the power of human reason deeply rooted in people's hearts.

The power of Loho is the power of wisdom. When we began promoting Loho, villagers quickly understood the meaning of Loho economics: "Making money with a clear conscience and becoming wealthy through working together." Loho economics, however, is just one of the five Loho programs. The other four—Loho governance, Loho etiquette, Loho housing, and Loho healthcare—are equally important. Without them, it is impossible to implement Loho economics. At one point in the past, the local government was going to invest in improving the low-lying

land in Yangqiao village, but it failed because villagers quarreled with each other over land rights. The Loho housing program convinced people to stop quarreling and quickly achieved group cooperation among them to accomplish this project. Lu Guangfu, a villager from the Second Cooperative, declared, "Loho is a force of production!" In the Loho plan, the economy, society, natural environment, culture, and health are all mutually dependent upon one another and kept in balance. The complementary yet contradictory relationships between the five aspects of Loho are simple and clear in the villagers' eyes. This kind of wisdom should become a consensus for the survival and development of the nation. The consensus can be created starting at the village, town, and county levels.

5.2 Loho Homeland Project Rebuilding Rural Society

Rural Chinese society was once like a family which maintained the morality of "having a strong determination to uplift oneself" and "deep affection for others." If society disintegrates, inevitably morality will degenerate. After the economic reforms began, the Village Communist Party Committee Offices and the Village Administrative Committees administered villages. Because of economic development and the drastically decrease in and deterioration of communal environmental resources, this kind of administrative system faces many problems. First of all, the two committees gradually become alienated from the people; people no longer have solidarity with them. Most villagers are concerned only with their own affairs and are as scattered as a sheet of sand. As a result, most villagers are indifferent to public affairs and lose their capacity to act collectively. Second, because the village's able-bodied laborers and those with education migrate to the city, the village becomes an "empty nest," short of talent and of effective links to the city. Third, the local government lacks personnel and is overburdened by public affairs. Too many public benefit policies and too much investment money are channeled by such a narrow portal with little public supervision; it provides a fertile ground for local interest groups. The fragmentation of rural society is the main reason for the collapse of rural culture. In order to revive rural culture, rural society must first be repaired; in order to repair rural society, first, the natural community must be reconstructed.

We helped Wuxi municipality to nurture rural society by organizing Loho Mutual Aid Groups—which assist local people in setting up various types of mutual aid, social service, and public welfare organizations. With the aid and support of the Mass Work Section and the township and villages' Communist Party Committees, Loho representatives—prominent and respected local people—are recommended or elected for participation in public affairs. These representatives are volunteers who serve without any remuneration, and that makes them especially appealing and credible to the villagers. After they have had a career, they are willing to participate in public affairs and respond to the trust of the villagers. Many Loho representatives, especially the chairs of Mutual Aid Groups from several pilot villages, have very touching stories about their altruistic activities. The organization of Mutual

Help Groups let villagers have more rights to know, to discuss, and to supervise. Therefore, Mutual Aid Groups also take on the following four duties: conflict resolution, environmental protection, preservation of culture and morality, and cooperation in economic production.

The Mutual Aid Group is not only an innovation in local democracy but also an innovation in moral revival. In Liang Shuming's words, it is an organization with sense of morality, stimulating villagers' sense of mutual aid and strong determination and desire for self-improvement. With the self-governing organization like Mutual Aid Group as a platform, the villagers' sense of responsibility and morality are encouraged, and "petitioning villages" and "quarrelsome villages" begin to change. For example, Daping village in Bailu Township was full of quarrels and conflicts and had organized collective petitions 29 times and thus was known as a "petition village." Yangqiao village in Shanghuang Township, where villagers didn't like to do things together, was known as a "selfish village." Through the organization of Mutual Aid Groups and social administrative innovations, those villages became Loho villages, public-spirited villages, and zero-petition villages. The petition leaders became village elites who worked on building Loho Homelands. Villagers began to clean up the trash around their villages voluntarily and established regulations for the management of sanitation. They also donated money for planting and maintaining trees in public areas of the village. A public gate arch for the Loho Homeland was built by the wood donated by the villagers as well. They were even willing to sell their land at half of the market price to create a public space in the village. In the cold of winter, they would gather around a stove discussing how to "promote industry with moral principles" and how to manufacture an eco-friendly brand of products. They also organized entertainment activities—not mahjong, but singing folk songs and performing the local Beibei dance.

Another important function of the Loho Mutual Aid Group is to improve the relationship between villagers and the village government. The "two committees" [the Communist Party Committee and Village Administrative Committee] of several pilot villages have recognized this cooperative function of Loho Mutual Help Groups. Having experienced the benefits of the spirit of autonomy and self-government and "of handling one's own business by oneself," Zing Qingbang, the director of the Daping Village Administrative Committee, said, "after the organization of Loho Mutual Aid Groups, the public affairs of the village became easy to handle and many internal conflicts were solved." Su Bo, the secretary of the Communist Party Committee of Sanbao village, said, "Loho has brought new hope to Sanbao village, and that new hope comes from popular participation. In the past, the village's two committees handled things under the supervision of the villagers, and people were often dissatisfied with the outcome. Now, by contrast, people are doing things by themselves, with the two committees supervising and supporting them. People are satisfied with that." Loho representatives not only share the workload of the villages' two committees and increase the level of supervision by the people, but they also introduce qualified people to the two committees for public service. The ideas of Loho Homeland and the platform of Mutual Aid Groups have revitalized the enthusiasm of current village representatives and at the same time

made room for more people to participate in the village's public affairs. Many relatively unknown villagers have found the opportunity to contribute their enthusiasm and abilities to public service. Moreover, the positive work done by Loho representatives also lets Communist Party members to play their leading roles more actively. In this process, the village's two committees avoid corruption and receive greater support from the people. Furthermore, the activities of the Mutual Aid Groups have allowed the committees to discover talented personnel—some cadres from Mutual Aid Groups have been recruited by the two committees, and this has further improved their efficacy and public image.

Loho Mutual Aid Groups have begun new approach to community public service. First, they share the burdens of public service, such as the management of trash collection, home care for the elderly and supervision of left-behind children, resolving local conflicts and quarrels, organizing cultural and physical activities like the Beibei dance and routine exercise for health, etc. Loho Mutual Aid Groups not only voluntarily offer these public services but also advocate a self-reliant village culture encouraging villagers to take up responsibility for the public benefit. While taking part in these public services, people also learn how to handle their own communal affairs, thus preventing people from complaining about distribution or taking more than their share of public resources. Second, Loho Mutual Aid Groups promote a reform of the public welfare policy. In the past, welfare for the poor and projects for public benefit had been either spread thinly everywhere or concentrated on a few privileged organizations, and this actually fueled people's greed and selfishness, stimulated conflict and complaints, and produced inequality. Loho Mutual Aid Groups' participation in welfare projects, such as low-cost insurance, prevents most of these disadvantages through public discussion, consultation, and supervision. I believe that the most helpful benefit the Loho Homeland project gives to the farmers is to help them organize themselves in order to distribute public and social resources equally and justly and at the same time cultivate their civic spirit and will to uplift themselves. Otherwise, welfare for the poor and projects for public benefit may go awry, fuel people's greed and desires, breed "all for the money" materialism and overly selfish individualism, and cause more social and environmental problems.

Loho Mutual Aid Groups also lay a solid foundation for farmer cooperatives. In rural China, many farmer cooperatives are solely economic organizations, and the members lack of any sense of mutual aid, will to uplift, or motivation to participate in public affairs in the villages. In reality, they are hardly real cooperatives. In Sanbao village in Wuxi County, for example, several former cooperatives became the tools of a few "capable people" to seize public resources and there is no trade cooperation in real meaning until the establishment of the Loho Mutual Aid Group. Only this kind of community organization for public benefit, social service, and mutual aid can win solid support from the villagers, and only as an organization with ethical meaning it can ensure its quality and integrity in order to develop the local economy and share the burden of the public service. Sanbao village has made an agreement of the public fund reservation ratio for its environmental plantations. In Daping village, the Loho Mutual Help Group has begun to prepare for a new countryside tourist plan called "The Joy of Farming Together." Building organizations

for public benefit, developing the local economy, and sharing the burden of public service, Loho Mutual Aid Groups start to walk on the path of hope toward a new rural society.

Through the practices of Loho Homeland, we have deeply experienced the fact that the power of Loho is the power of the society, especially the community organizations. Society is the home for people living in this world to settle down and carry out their various pursuits. In ancient rural China, individuals gained a sense of security in the Great Way of the Five Confucian Relationships and believed that society would provide them communal benefits. Once society disintegrates into atomism with individuals separate like grains of sand, an individual will lose not only any sense of security but also love and familial affection, which are like one's flesh and blood; one's willingness to live will subsequently wither as well. People in Dahe village in Wuxi County were long selfish and disorganized. Once when a truck of soybeans drove into a river, the villagers rushed to the site—not to save the driver but to loot the soybeans. After it became a pilot village of Loho Homeland accompanied with the organization of the Mutual Aid Group and joint council, another car ran into a river and all the villagers rushed to the site again, this time not to loot but to rescue the passengers and salvage their belongings in coordination with the Loho association and the village committee. With the help of organization and ideals, the character of a village can completely change.

Human conscience is like a cloud in the sky, sometimes it can be seen, and sometimes it disappears. However, when clouds gather together, rain will fall down. Social organization, especially community organization, is a means of bringing together people with conscience. Cultural construction without social construction is just a castle on the sand. If a cultural revival project only emphasizes the individual cultivation without participation in any social construction or community organization, then it is just an unrealistic dream. Through the Loho Homeland project, villagers rebuild their social organizations by themselves, and this ensures not only the security of the society but also the stability of lives based on the revival of morality. Once the atomistic, sand-like individuals are organized as "one big family," their sense of morality and responsibility will be stimulated, and through this they will gain a sense of happiness. Professor Pan Wei of Peking University has suggested that "reestablishing the natural communities" should be the cornerstone of the social system of China. This is indeed a great insight.

5.3 Loho Homeland Project of Training Rural Social Workers

Traditional Chinese rural culture thrived on the imperial examination system and the custom of returning to one's native place after retirement. By passing the imperial examination, a peasant could be appointed as an official in the civil service system or become a literati, artist, or merchant, and after his retirement, he would probably return to live in his hometown as a member of the gentry, participate in

rural governance and elementary education, and make various contributions to the local culture. The process of modernization causes rural "brain drain." The city draws away financial and human resources from the country. The city–country relationship is no longer one of mutual symbiosis but rather unilateral exploitation. Modern education becomes a transfusion machine draining away rural youth people. And once people leave the countryside, they do not want to return. The idea of the country as a source of culture has completely withered.

By recruiting college students as rural social workers, the Loho Homeland project is exploring a way to draw educated people back to the countryside, so that it can gain something back from the city. Firstly, this is a way to partly solve the college student unemployment problem and let college students gain working experience and improve themselves through rural social work. Secondly, to a certain degree, this program helps the government solve the problem of "software construction," especially cultural construction, for the new rural building campaign. Thirdly, it will channel the resources from the city to the country, improve access of rural products to the market, and promote a people-oriented urban–rural integration policy. Fourthly, it can serve as a safety valve, helping the government supervise the execution of the budget for the public benefit. As a professional nonprofit organization of social work, its project budgets and administrative expenses are covered by the government's funding of its social services and support from other charity foundations, thus alleviating the human costs for the public service. The professional backgrounds of these social workers also help the local village elevate the professional level of its public administration and service.

The preparatory education and training for these social workers is very important and includes supplementary courses to develop their thinking as well as teach them management and professional skills which they lack of from modern education. Modern education puts too much emphasis on knowledge and too little on life, too much on innovation and too little on the tradition, and too much on developing personal talent and too little on developing the person. The major reading assignments for Loho social workers include the Confucian Classics, *The Analects*, *The Three Character Classic*, *Standards for Being a Good Student and Child*, and Liang Shuming's books. And their interactions with the villagers are opportunities for them to learn rural culture, to discover its problems, to understand villagers' needs, to disseminate the Loho ideas, and to offer the services; and at the same time, working as a service team helps them learn from each other, and the whole process enhances their capacities. There is also a very important path in our managing system as a self-learning platform for our social workers—the Morning Talk School. Through reading Liang Shuming's "Morning Talks" and other classics, the trainees exchange their experiences and teach each other based on their rural construction efforts. Teachers participate mainly through making comments. This learning and managing system also includes management by objective, operational guidelines, progress reports, an evaluation system, etc. Most importantly, it all starts from the hearts of people and makes Loho a mutual goal, the construction of the Loho Homeland a collective project for everyone.

The main task for these social workers is to take part in the renovation of public services and social administration as initiated by the government. Even in places where rural organizations such as Loho associations have been built, social workers still have indispensable functions, or rather because of that, these places have a greater desire for social workers. Organizations like Loho Mutual Help Groups play important roles in helping villagers express their opinions on village affairs, organizing and mobilizing people to participate, and resolving conflicts. In terms of professionalism, however, their functions are still very limited. Since members of the Loho Mutual Aid Groups are part-time volunteers with their own occupations, they cannot devote too much time toward public service, and their moral stature precludes them from receiving payment. Therefore, there is a need for a professional organization of social workers to share the burden of public service with the party and the village committees.

Social work is mainly conducted in the Loho compound of the village, i.e., the community learning center or cultural center. Loho social workers have to learn how to consolidate the "Six Walls" (bringing energy to the Loho compound, cooperating with the coordinating group of the government, helping the Mutual Help Group, organizing the Youth Corps, participating in the joint council, and communicating with the Relatives and Friends Group in the city), to kindle the "Seven Lanterns" for social education and services (the Confucian Classics, the etiquette, the environmentalism, social security, healthcare, patriotism, and vocational skills), and to open the "Five Doors" of the means of livelihood (agriculture, education, entertainment, art, and healthcare). After the Sichuan earthquake, these social workers cooperated with the green architects to help villagers build environmentally friendly housing, and they learned the skills of environmental farming and planting from the organic agriculture experts and brought their successful experiences from the Pengzhou experimental farm to Wuxi. Female social workers also organized local women to make handicraft cloth shoes and help them develop environmental tourism.

With regard to care for left-behind children, social workers not only do their work in the villages but also go into the rural schools and work as substitute teachers for the "supplementary subjects" such as music, gymnastics, art, and ethics, all of which are scarce and very much needed. To suit with the educational needs for the countryside, they start their teaching in seven main aspects, such as reciting the Confucian Classics at school, the education for sustainable development, and so on. College students show stronger feelings of devotion at the teaching positions than in the rural communities. Working as "substitute teachers" also makes it easier to win greater respect from the children and their parents, as rural China still maintains the tradition of "honoring the teacher and respecting his teachings." Social workers spend 3 days a week at the schools and 2 days at the local community, and this helps bring the village and the school together to take care of the left-behind children. It also increases the cultural influence and the attachment of the school to the village.

Recruiting college students to countryside as social workers is rather like sending a "vanguard." The second source of manpower for the rural construction is composed of retirees, who we call "Silver Children." Such people have witnessed the rapid

urbanization in China and feel nostalgia for the countryside. Some of them were the "rusticated youth" sent to the countryside when they were young and still hold complex ambivalent feelings toward the rural village. Through mobilizing the "Silver Children's Brigade" to take care of the left-behind children in the countryside, we draw many elderly intellectuals going back to the rural areas in search of their native places. They also voluntarily teach in elderly schools and recruit more volunteers. The third potential power we called the "Golden Collar," which is mainly composed of entrepreneurs. Besides donating money, more importantly, they are willing to contribute their time and energy to participate in our social works. And that is a way to show love and appreciation to their native places as well as a kind of Chinese-style charity.

The Loho Homeland project explores not only a rural–urban symbiosis based on rural reconstruction but also a way to nurture the countryside, to draw urban elite back, and to foster local talents. Through various channels, we are calling for more social participation and governmental support. We hope we can mediate more cooperative relations between the rural areas and the universities, especially those which have social work programs. We also hope we can draw more college students and people who have enthusiasm for the rural area to look back to the countryside, to go into the countryside, and to build the countryside. In this process, we try to pass down the wisdom of Confucian education. It is an educational system based on benevolent love, regulated by the etiquette, and mediated by the music. It is a set of educational institutions including family education, village school, and academy. The aim of this education is to foster gentleman with upright personality. Let us make the rural village as a university in the fields to foster and forge great men and true gentlemen.

5.4 Loho Homeland Building a Platform for Social Governance

As far as either culture or survival is concerned, rural areas are the root of China, just as the family is the root of the people of China. In the past, rural China was an organic world linked together from the household to the clan, to the township, and directly to the state. It was a cultural community composed of rural gentry, clan field, ancestral hall, Confucian academy, and township treaty. Even after all of these have become history, rural village in modern times is still longing for a harmonious community of life; therefore, Loho Homeland creates a new form of social organization: the village joint council.

The joint council is a platform for social governance led by the Communist Party village branch, in charge of the village committee, coordinated with the Loho Mutual Help Groups, sponsored by the public welfare organizations, and supported by the neighborhood grid units. Every month or every half month, the village branch secretary will convene a meeting. The routine agenda of the joint council contains news and updates from all the participants as well as discussions and resolutions in

order to ensure the policies and missions of the two committees will be executed and the opinions and responses from the masses and social organizations will be heard. By doing so, while sharing the public duties, the Loho representatives also secure the right to know, the right to be consulted with, and the right to supervise the public affairs. This also helps social work organizations and neighborhood grid units grasp the general situation in the community, so that they could offer their services accordingly. When there is no consensus at the meeting, the secretary of the Communist Party village branch has the right of veto, while the other participants have the right to reserve their opinions and submit them to the superior. Democratic and centralized, complementary and symbiotic, plural and harmonious, the Loho Joint Council is a platform of social governance and public service, which allows all the participants and authorities concerned to support as well as to supervise each other. For those people who stay in or return to the countryside, the joint council is like their home in a modern village.

The essence of the joint council is a devotion to public service or, in other words, the "Loho spirit," which is the most needed virtue in China today. The public service here is not only as the means to improve the people's material life but also as a method to induce and cultivate the civic spirit and upright personality of both the service providers and service takers. Since the fundamental idea of Loho Homeland is based on the philosophy of "To Willingly Follow the Way and to Pursue Harmony" (乐道尚和), the public service derived from this idea naturally performs a self-teaching function and has a unique spiritual character.

Take the annoying garbage cleaning issue as an example. If it is dealt with by administrative and economic methods, the only way to solve it is to hire trash workers with government funds. However, in a Wuxi Loho Homeland pilot village, organized and managed by the Loho Mutual Help Group, villagers voluntarily collected the garbage and cleaned the public area assigned to them on a regular basis. Social workers also teach villagers how to divide the garbage into different groups. The Communist Party village branch and the village committee only have to coordinate the transportation of the garbage. This new mode of social management solves the garbage cleaning problem with almost zero expenditures even in a village with a population of several thousand. The tree planting and maintenance in the public space, too, was carried out by several local units. While in many places the local governments face the problem of "planting trees every year but no successful reforestation happens," the survival rate of tree seedlings is very high in Wuxi. The marsh gas project in Daping, which faced a lot of obstacles before, was also carried out successfully because of the Loho management.

The joint council is not only revitalizing the soil of morality in the countryside but also brings in more moral education experts and resources in order to cultivate Loho manners and love of righteousness by holding various educational activities, such as Taiji exercise, healthful calisthenics, Beibei dance, and rustic song. The health management of the masses and athletic activities are no longer regarded by the two committees as a burden, but as integral parts of the country life coordinated by the two committees, Loho representatives, nonprofit organizations, and neighborhood grid units. The following two activities operated through the same

mechanism: On September 28, 2011, Confucius' birthday, Wuxi County started a "The Accessible Analects" movement. And on November 3, an "Always Remember the National Flag" activity was held—a flag raising, singing the national anthem, a national news briefing, and recitation of the classics—and then scheduled these activities on a regular basis.

The Village Joint Council as a social governance platform for multiple parties set a ground for ensuring the quality of food products and the honesty of the market system and tries to find an effective way to solve the food product safety problem from the root. When the rice from Yangqiao (羊桥) was shipped to Chongqing and Chengdu, it was the first time that consumers could buy rice with the photos and profiles of the producers on the retail packages. The Mutual Help Groups are in charge of the quality control to ensure the rice is chemical-free, the social worker organizations help farmers to expand the green market and encourage them to make profiles for their products, and the village and party committees handle the administrative paperwork.

The Village Joint Council is also responsible for taking care of the left-behind children. This project is coordinated by the village and party committees and supported by the community grid units. Volunteer neighborhood mothers are organized by the Loho Mutual Help Groups to take care of neighboring kids who need help, including doing their laundries and cooking meals for them, taking them to and from schools, and helping them with homeworks, and so on. The social worker organizations offer the professional services and training. They organize the left-behind children into a kid's corps and teach them to read the Confucian classics and do calisthenics. They also help volunteer neighborhood mothers to hold handicraft fairs and souvenir stores to improve their financial status.

Moreover, the infants and the elders in the village and each villager's medical care and even burial arrangement were managed by the Village Joint Council. In Loho Homeland pilot villages, most people would receive donations from their neighbors when having a serious illness, because they know they might need similar support later. For example, when a volunteer got seriously ill in 2012, the council held several meetings to discuss how to provide assistance. The council members gave him various kinds of help to support him and his family. It arranged for him to receive medical treatment, took turns staying with him all the time, and, after his death, organized a memorial meeting and took care of his child. This of mutual aid fosters a strong identity of community member.

Evaluation and reconciliation are the other two functions of the joint council. It praises progressive villagers and criticizes those who violate community. It also brings reconciliation between quarrelsome villagers by neither legal nor religious means, but through moral suasion and appeal to customs. The villagers call it "to reason with someone." Usually, if there is a quarrel between villagers, it will not bother the village committee to take action. Instead, the leaders of the Loho Mutual Help Group will try to appease the quarrel first; if it still cannot be solved, it will be brought to the Loho Hall, and let the members of the joint council work as a "jury" to decide the fairness of each statement. Once I attended a Loho Hall reconciliation hearing. The quarrel was that one party backed up his car and broke damaged the

corner of another party's house. And the two burst into an argument over this because one party said something inappropriate. After people talked and reasoned with both sides, the driver agreed to compensate the house owner some hundreds of dollars and the quarrel was reconciled. However, at that moment, the house owner said, "Ah, I don't want the compensation anymore. Sorry folks, after we talked it through, I decide to let it go."

The Loho Joint Council, Mutual Help Group, and the Loho compound, ("two assemblies and one house") mode, represent a respect of the local humanistic tradition and the legacy of Chinese ancient wisdom. There are two important issues in the development of rural China. While bureaucratic administration is unavoidably alien to the masses, grassroots institutions, such as community and social worker organizations, village and party committees, and joint councils, offer a solution for reintegrating them. Thus, vertical administration and horizontal social governance are able to integrate with each other organically. The former becomes framework for the latter, and the latter becomes the foundation for the former. The upper structure's need for stability and the lower structure's aspirations to participation not only avoid tension with each other but actually form a symbiotic relation. This cannot be explained by the Western theories that emphasize conflict. Western culture is based on individual, Chinese culture on the family. The social construction in Wuxi is to build a family-like community. It cannot rely only on patriarch authority but must rely on the support of every family member. Communist Party social governance cannot rely only on governmental power but also the participation of all social organizations. However, the patriarch has the responsibility to create a broader platform of social governance for all the family members. After all, a harmonious family is the basis of all success.

Western modes of thinking differentiate between subject and object, which is based on individualism and emphasizes confrontation. Chinese wisdom is based on the the complementarity of *yin* and *yang*, which is an "all for one and one for all" collective mode of thinking. The components of Chinese society are like different organs of a dragon, which are complementary and symbiotic, while the Western style of social management is like a hydra with competitive heads which check and balance each other. Unlike the Western "winner takes all" mode of thinking, in China we try to create a win–win situation in a tolerant society. In order to develop China's own taxonomy social morphology, we must consciously reject Western ones and manifest the underlying Chinese mode of thinking—harmonious heterogeneity and complementary symbiosis. Since the individual participants share the same values, we can achieve the final goal of symbiosis, solidarity, and family-like community, so as to find a unique form of social management for rural China.

For the last 5 years, Loho Homeland has had multiple facets. In Pengzhou, it's a social organization for reconstruction after an earthquake; in Wuxi, it's an administrative renovation led by the local government. When we observe this social practice in the context of traditional culture, we will find in it what Liang Shuming said were the three essential elements of the traditional rural Chinese society: reason, custom, and gentry.

As a contemporary cultural revitalization movement, the rural construction of this new era still requires the awakening of reason to stimulate people's desire for mutual help and the revitalization of traditional customs to establish grassroots organizations in rural society. To fulfill the two conditions, rural construction today also requires interested people's return to the countryside to assist the local government and villagers. The project, in other words, is aiming to realize the ideal of rural China raised by Liang Shuming and many other worthy predecessors while without losing its vitality in the modern era. Through the movement, we discover the power and prove the workability of the ideal of Loho.

Nevertheless, Loho Homeland is merely a social experiment, which is still ongoing and has not proved to be successful. Absorbing and internalizing Confucian wisdom is one of the necessary means by which we will continue and deepen this experiment. Confucianism emphasizes the good of human nature so as to encourage people to do good deeds. Starting with individual self-discipline ("being watchful over oneself when alone" (慎独)" Confucianism tries to establish a society in which all people live together with mutual respect and consideration. On the other hand, Confucianism also tolerates the differences in order to build a social structure of complementary symbiosis and harmonious heterogeneity. Confucianism believes that humane love and filial piety will coordinate the relationships among family members, neighbors, teachers and students, government and citizens. To resolve today's life issues and social problems, we should learn from Confucianism.

This is an experiment that connects with the process of modernization and leads to the creation of a new environmentally sound civilization. It may take the efforts of several generations to achieve it and may be confronted with unpredicted setbacks and difficulties. However, like the pioneers of rural reconstruction in the early twentieth century, we will inherit traditional culture and pass it on, and we will never give up until we find a solution for integration of the traditional and modern. *This chapter has been translated from the Chinese by the editor.*

Chapter 6
Modernizing Tradition or Restoring Antiquity as Confucian Alternatives: A View from Reading Wedding Rituals in Contemporary China

Margaret Mih Tillman and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman

6.1 Contextual Introduction

In the spring of 2011, commentators closely followed the erection, as well as the subsequent removal and re-situating, of a statue of Confucius in Tian'anmen Square in Beijing. The statue of Confucius first stood in front of the newly reopened National History Museum and obliquely across from Chairman Mao Zedong's portrait, mounted above the entrance to Late Imperial China's Forbidden City; thus, the statue's position symbolically indicated that Confucius should be at least as prominent as Chairman Mao. Western observers speculated that the statue's erection was "a seismic step in the Communist Party's rehabilitation of Confucianism"; after its removal to an inconspicuous northwest corner of the garden courtyard from where the Confucius statue might merely catch an oblique glimpse of the masses exiting the National History Museum, Western observers concluded that old-guard leftist factions within the Communist Party had triumphed over new Confucian revivalists (Andrew Jacobs 2011). This political infighting over representations of China's past coincided with anticipations regarding the upcoming succession in China's political leadership marking a transition to another generation of leaders. While these conflicts and changes caught the attention of the Western media, few in the West noted the diversity of opinions within the currents of Confucian revivalism; the statue of Confucius stands (or disappears) as a signifier that encompasses and subsumes an extraordinary scope of positions on Confucian revivalism in China's political culture. In this article, we would like to illustrate the spectrum of ideas regarding the

M.M. Tillman (✉)
Department of History, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, USA
e-mail: mtillma@purdue.edu

H.C. Tillman
Professor of History, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, USA

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*, China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_6

Confucian revival movement and the diversity of symbols that these revivalists wield to champion their own conception of "tradition."

At the time the Confucius statue in Tian'anmen Square was sparking controversy, we were in Beijing conducting research, as well as gathering feedback on our newly published article, *A Joyful Union*, about a modernized Confucian wedding ritual.[1] In that article, we analyzed the way that the director of Shanghai's East China Normal University Press, Zhu Jieren 朱杰人, modernized the wedding rites in *Zhu Xi's Family Rituals* 朱子家礼 (*Zhuzi jiali*), which are ascribed to his ancestor, the pivotal Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200).[2] We suggested that because Zhu Xi himself had changed classical family rituals to fit his times, his descendent should enjoy the same license to alter old ritual practices. We also placed these rites within the context of nongovernmental, intellectual responses to socioeconomic and demographic issues with marriage—which may be perennial, but are seen by many Chinese as being exacerbated by individualism in post-reform China. In presenting our article and research to Chinese audiences, we found that Zhu Jieren had voiced among the most "liberal" visions of the restoration of ritual because of his willingness to soften the presence of patriarchal authority within the rituals. Because Zhu acknowledges simplifying and modernizing tradition, we consider his approach to be distinct from current efforts for *fugu* 复古 or "the restoration of antiquity," especially when we consider the hostility that some antiquity revivalists have voiced about Zhu Jieren's modernized version of classical rituals. Struck by the forceful and outspoken opposition of certain male elders and graduate students to the Zhu ritual, we began to distribute surveys to ascertain the pervasiveness of their critiques of the Zhu wedding; thereby, we discovered that the diversity, range, and even mixed emotions far exceeded anything we had expected. These responses have helped to shape our understanding of the spectrum of opinions within and about the revivalist movement, but our analysis of the surveys was published elsewhere.[3] Thus, although Zhu Jieren engages in contemporary revivalism, his adaptations mark his ritual as distinct from more conservative modes of restorationism; furthermore, we contend that this spectrum between "modernizing" or adaptive revitalizing tradition and "conservative" restoration of tradition is a legacy of the intellectual diversity within Confucian traditions.

---

[1] "A Joyful Union" (2010). Our first Chinese version of that article appeared in that spring of 2011; "Xijie lianli: *Zhuzi jiali·hunli* de xiandaihua" 喜结连理:《朱子家礼·婚礼》的现代化 (A Joyful Union: The Modernization of the Wedding Rituals from the *Zhu Xi Family Rituals*), *Zhongguo Renleixue pinglun* 中国人类学评论 (*China Anthropology Review*), No. 19 (2011), pp. 140–156. A revised Chinese version was later published in Chen Lai 陈来 and Zhu Jieren 朱杰人 (2011).

[2] Zhu Xi (2003). English translation by Patricia Ebrey is available, Chu Hsi (Zhu Xi) (1991). Although most people follow Zhu Xi's son-in-law in saying that the *Jiali* incorporated Zhu Xi's views of family rituals, some scholars since the Qing had disputed that claim. An excellent overview of this controversy and a defense of the traditional view can be found in a recent dissertation, a revised version of which is forthcoming from East China Normal University Press in Shanghai. See Yin Hui 殷慧 (2009).

[3] See our "Zhuzi wenhua fuxing de qianzaili: yi Zhongguo xuesheng 'Zhuzi hunli xiandaiban' de minyi diaocha wei li" 朱子文化复兴的潜在力:以中国学生《朱子婚礼现代版》的民意调查为例 (Figuring the Potential for a Revival of Zhuzi Culture: Chinese Student Responses to the Modernized Zhuzi Wedding Ritual), in Chen Lai and Zhu Jieren (2012).

This present essay will situate Zhu Jieren's model Confucian wedding in a spectrum of Confucian wedding rituals promoted today. Whereas "A Joyful Union" focused primarily on the modification of ritual, this essay will focus more heavily on the interpretation of ritual and the rendering of symbols. As an expert on ancient texts and as the chief editor of one of China's leading textbook publishers, Zhu Jieren emphasized "liturgy" that moved from text to performance. In responding to the draft of our initial article about his wedding ritual, he made this emphasis even more explicit in the title and text of his article (Zhu Jieren 2011). In contrast to Zhu Jieren's focus on liturgy, the Zhang and Lei models more closely adhered to ceremonial symbols and gestures as the markers of their adherence to classical precedents. Although the molders of these two models consulted *Zhu Xi's Family Rituals*, they looked back to more ancient classics, which had received official recognition from earlier dynastic governments.

The reinvention of ritual has occurred almost simultaneously in these circles of intellectuals. The Zhu wedding took place in Shanghai on December 5, 2009; the Zhang wedding was held in Beijing on June 20, 2010; the Lei ceremony was held in Beijing on July 2, 2011. In brief, these three contemporary Confucian weddings had four major differences. First, in contrast to Zhu Jieren's focus on liturgy, the two other models more closely adhered to ceremonial symbols and gestures as the markers of their adherence to classical precedents. Second, although the molders of these two Beijing models did consult Zhu Xi's Family Rituals from the twelfth century, they looked back to more ancient classics, which had received official recognition from earlier dynastic governments. Third, both the Zhang and Lei weddings promoted the status of Confucius, while the Zhu wedding promoted Zhu Xi and Zhu Xi's Family Rituals. Fourth, there was a different order or authoritative origin; while the Zhang and Lei weddings began with kowtows to the Heavens and Earth and then to parents and Confucius, the Zhu wedding began with respectful reporting to the ancestors. Each person hoped that his model would influence young people to reinvest in traditional values, so these rituals help to articulate unique positions in a larger conversation about ritual propriety and traditional values in modern China. All of the creators of the wedding rituals would consider themselves to be adherents of traditional values, but each allows innovation at different points—the symbolic choreography in the Zhang wedding, "personhood" expression in the Lei wedding, and the gender equality in the Zhu wedding. Even the Zhang and the Lei weddings modify tradition; thus, this article will explore what aspects of ancient traditions each wedding model seeks to restore as well as what each modifies, especially in terms of liturgy, symbolism, and choreography.

6.2 Official Blessing of Ceremonial Correctness: The Zhang Wedding

Among revivalist intellectuals, perhaps the most famous wedding model is Zhang Xianglong's 张祥龙 ritual for his son. Zhang Xianglong's Western background is not what one would expect of a proponent for reviving ancient Confucian rituals. As

a professor of philosophy at Peking University in Beijing, Zhang specializes in classical Daoism, in addition to ancient Confucianism and modern Western philosophy, especially Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) and Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002). After receiving his B.A. at Peking University, Zhang earned his M.A. at the University of Toledo in Ohio and his Ph.D. at the University of Buffalo in New York. In our interview with him and his son Tim (Zhang Taixu 张泰苏) on November 30, 2010, we learned that the bride and groom had meet while undergraduates at Yale University; moreover, both continued their graduate studies there. Having earned his law degree, the groom continued in a Ph.D. program in economic history, while his wife, Zhao Xiaoxue 赵霄雪, was a Ph.D. candidate in Economics focusing on development of "places that are rarely studied in the traditional canon." Unfortunately since she had returned to her research at Yale, we did not have the opportunity to listen to her perspective.

In the interview and in a speech at the wedding banquet, Professor Zhang explained his reasons for recreating an ancient Confucian ritual for his son's wedding. He announced that he is a *ruzhe* 儒者 (the term conventionally glossed as "Confucian"), "a person who believes in ruxue 儒学" (i.e., Confucianism). He then rhetorically posed the question for his audience: How could he, as an "ordinary intellectual" in modern China, develop into a Confucian? Contextually, he pointed out that he and others had lived through too many changes in modern China's tumulus history. In his youth, he believed in Marxism and Mao's thought, but when he began focusing on environmental issues, he turned to Daoism and even for a while believed in (Western) individualism. What changed his perspective the most was having a child. He was moved by how his wife would bundle up their son and speak sweetly to him. Such an expression of natural love demonstrated human feelings (*renqing* 人情) and human relations—the essential core of Confucianism. To him, Confucianism meant looking after the young and caring for the elderly. Thus, Zhang researched the sources and designed this Confucian wedding so that his son and daughter-in-law would focus on Confucian values as the foundation of their relationship. When they have children of their own, he asserted, they would develop a greater appreciation for Confucianism as a guide in their family life. Another note on how focused Zhang Xianglong is on the Confucian aspects of wedding rituals was conveyed to us through his son after they had watched the Zhu wedding video. While receptive to the Zhu's Confucian ritual, Professor Zhang was surprised that Zhu Jieren would "allow his son" to also have a Western wedding ceremony. That difference of perspective is very suggestive of the gap between modernizing tradition (with a degree of borrowing from the West) and a more fundamental revival of Confucian antiquity. Professor Zhang has participated in other activities to promote Confucianism today, such as his contribution of an essay to a scholarly volume responding to Jiang Qing's 蒋庆 development of a new "Political Confucianism" for China.[4]

[4] Xianglong Zhang (2011). This volume begins with Jiang's essay, "From Mind Confucianism to Political Confucianism," pp. 17–32, to which the other essays respond, and concludes with a biographical account by Erika Yu and Meng Fan, "A Confucian Coming of Age," pp. 241–257. See also Jiang Qing, Zhengzhi ruxue (Political Confucianism), (Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing [Sanlian]: (2004).

While discussing the claims of fugu proponents about ritual propriety, we would like to indicate the difference between "on-stage" and "off-stage" aspects, which can be ritualized or de-ritualized, in the Zhu and Zhang weddings. For example, although the Zhu groom had followed traditional Chinese customs of proving his commitment to the bride, these traditional customs occurred "off stage." Some *fugu* proponents criticized the Zhu wedding because it apparently failed to include any of these customary "tests" of the groom's courage and persistence, such as contending with the bride's neighbors and friends who blocked access to her home. Zhu Qi commented to us that he had not taken his best friends, but fellows who could assist in forceful negotiations and small bribes that the tests required. Furthermore, these customary hurdles had lasted an entire day before the wedding. Like Zhu Xi, Zhu Jieren differentiated these "folk customs" from true Confucian ritual. (Thus, in some ways, Zhu Jieren's attitude more closely follows conventional Confucian prejudices against local superstitions and customs, in contrast to the romantic attitudes of some *fugu* proponents toward Chinese folk practices.) In the Zhang wedding, as we will see below, these tests are shortened, ritualized, and "on stage" with markers of Confucian erudition and propriety. Even though the Zhang couple would never have a "Western ceremony," they nevertheless wore wedding rings throughout their wedding. Whereas the Zhu couple's Western ceremony ritualized the exchange of rings as a symbolic moment of love and commitment, the Zhang couple retained this Western "marker" of marital status, but de-ritualized the exchange of rings "off stage." Thus, these couples could choose markers of marital status in ways that elevated those symbols through ritual or downplayed them as mere customary practice.

After conducting his research and writing the liturgy, Zhang Xianglong invited Feng Zhe 冯哲 to be the master of ceremonies. Feng is a notable advocate of reviving traditional Chinese culture and the founder of the Four Seas Confucius Academy 四海孔子书院 in Beijing. On June 20, 2010, the wedding was held in the large hall (*litang* 礼堂) of the Dayuan 达园 Hotel near the Yiheyuan 颐和园 in the vicinity of the groom's family home at Peking University. It was the garden that the groom said was special, but all the ceremony and banquet occurred inside the hotel's hall.

The presence of state officials and various aspects, such as the color of the wedding vestments, accorded with current assumptions about Chinese traditions. When Feng Zhe summoned the families to take their places, the parents sat facing each other with their child standing behind them; as we will see, each family remained symbolically within its own ancestral birthplace. (Thus, the Zhang wedding's sense of separated spatial realms differed from the Zhu wedding, where the families had shared an ancestral altar and which had included a bridal procession down the main aisle of the wedding hall.) The Zhang bride was dressed in the conventional red wedding dress with red slippers, and the groom donned a black scholar's robe adorned with a large red bow slung over his shoulder to center over his chest. The flanking groomsmen wore black Western suits, and the accompanying bridesmaids wore traditional Manchu *qipao*. Feng Zhe and Tim's parents wore Sun Yat-sen jackets with Chinese collars. Thus, the wedding party dressed in wedding attire that was popular during the period of the Republic in the 1910s through the 1940s. But

everyone else dressed very casually, with one guest even wearing Bermuda shorts in the hot Beijing summer. The CD video of the wedding also includes the makeup preparations for the ceremony and the banquet toasts following the wedding ritual.

Fugu proponents have asserted that the presence of officials or elites who champion Confucian rituals and values augmented the ceremony's significance. Before Feng Zhe began reading the liturgy, he recognized the families of the groom and bride, but did not call out the individual names of the immediate family members. Instead, he announced the name and title of each of his ten invited "dignitaries from various areas of society" who sat at the largest table in the middle of the hall. Even though these dignitaries were notable persons from realms of education, government, and business, a couple of senior participants in our discussion at Renmin University referred approvingly of this group as representative leaders of the Confucian revival whose presence bestowed a kind of formal approval of the rites. After introducing the dignitaries, Feng Zhe expressed a brief welcome to the couple's friends and teachers from Yale University, who were seated at the rear tables. (Feng's inclusion of these foreign guests also had a ring of Confucian pride for the respect that was offered from afar—as when foreign emissaries were invited to witness selected court rituals in imperial China.) Such an arrangement underlined the importance of the officials and public intellectuals whose presence was suggested by Feng Zhe "as a way to enhance the public influence of the ceremony, so the wedding ceremony would have greater cultural significance" 希望因此扩大影响,也因此而使婚礼具有官方认可更广泛的文 化意义。[5] As such language makes clear, the ceremony was not only a family wedding, but also part of an Enlightenment project to transform the thinking and customs of the masses.

The written liturgy for the wedding ceremony was five single-spaced pages of specific instructions in outline form with 14 scholarly footnotes citing the classics and providing explanations of terms, the pronunciation of archiac vocabulary, the importance of setting in relation to the cardinal directions, etc. For instance, the backdrop was a red curtain on which the wedding symbol of "double happiness" was centered between a couplet invoking the blessings of the Heavens and Earth (*tiandi* 天地), parents, teachers, and spiritual forces in nature. As a precursor of its centrality in the *fugu* ceremony, the bride and groom individually kowtowed to the Heavens and Earth before going to their dressing rooms to prepare for the ceremony. The couplet read:

> Heavens & Earth, Parents, Ruler, and Teacher;
> Yin & Yang, Son & Moon, and Stars.
> 天地亲君师, 阴阳日月星。

Professor Zhang's written commentary claims that the two characters for ruler and teacher should be read as referring to Confucius as the sage-king of culture and principal teacher in China. The instructions in the liturgy noted that kowtowing or fully prostrating to the Heavens and Earth and also to the First Teacher Confucius should be made in the direction of this couplet. Here, the order for the ritual flows down from the authority of the Heavens and Earth, which takes priority over the

[5] Elaboration from Professor Zhang's communication, June 2012.

family; moreover, this privileging of the Heavens and Earth will, as we shall see, be reinforced at three crucial points in the liturgy for the Zhang wedding.

Zhang Xianglong and Feng Zhe choreographed the ceremony in ways that dovetailed with current assumptions about Chinese traditions. After playing a sound recording of setting off traditional fireworks (such use of actual fireworks probably became customary since the Ming dynasty) to drive away inauspicious or troubling spirits, the wedding ceremony began with the groom being instructed by his father to kowtow twice to the Heavens and Earth. Before kowtowing to the Heavens and Earth, the groom took a sip of wine and then spat it out of his mouth in a symbolic cleansing of himself. As in the Zhu wedding, the groom's father then instructed him with quotations from the classics to marry in order to provide the family with descendants, and the groom replied with the classical quotation that he promises to do so, fearful only of not fulfilling his obligations. Attention then shifted to the bride's side where a mirror image of the ritual evolved; she too was instructed by her father first to kowtow to the Heavens and Earth, and she also promised to follow his subsequent instructions about marriage. Unlike in the Zhu wedding, her head was then draped with a red cover in anticipation of the arrival of her fiancée. Switching the focus back, the groom with his accompanying groomsmen walked along the wall of the hall until this longest possible route took the groom to the opposite (here south) side of the hall to knell before the bride's parents and kowtow to them. Upon their acceptance of the groom, they further instructed their daughter about being a respectful bride and daughter-in-law. As in the Zhu wedding, the mother of the bride then arranged her daughter's clothing in accordance to the directions in the ancient texts, and she specifically pinned a pink handkerchief on the upper portion of her red dress. The bride's maid-of-honor then gave the bride's hand to the groom. Because her entire head was covered, the bride had to be lead everywhere.

At this point occurs the innovation that Zhang Xianglong feels is his most important contribution to solving the problem of symbolically representing the bride's long journey in a cart from her home in Shenyang to the groom's home in Beijing. Bringing the bride home, the groom enacts the symbolism by walking backwards with the steps representing turns of the horse cart's wheels. Nine steps backward are by figurative reduction taken to represent a distant journey. By holding the bride's hands and leading her, while blinded by her head covering, also seems to represent her learning to trust and rely upon her husband's leading role. (The groom's holding her hands could have been seen as violating the traditional Confucian prohibitions against even the hands of the couple touching before the marriage ceremony at the groom's home; however, the *fugu* restorationists apparently did not notice this anomaly.) After the symbolic nine steps backward, the couple walked side by side, accompanied by their attendants, until they arrived before the groom's parents. Feng Zhe explained the symbolism to the guests and elicited laughter when he encouraged the bride and groom to take their time returning "home." Like Zhu Jieren, Zhang Xianglong saw the difficulty of condensing a long and difficult courtship ritual into a short wedding ceremony; whereas Zhu had emphasized the liturgy rather than spatial or temporal context, Zhang emphasized instead the symbolic rendering of that spatial and temporal context.

Thus, in order to render the spatial and temporal context clearly visible, the Zhang wedding closely followed a narrative of preparation, transportation, and unification as a couple. After the groom presented his bride to his parents, the father immediately instructed them to kowtow together to the Heavens and Earth. They also kowtowed to the parents and then to Confucius, a gesture that highlighted the wedding's Confucian character; moreover, they ultimately bowed to one another. Before the groom was allowed to lift the cloth covering her head, he had to recite a poem that would win her approval. Although she shook her head disapprovingly on his first try, the groom recited a poem in his second (i.e., final) attempt that did satisfy her. After the groom was thus empowered to remove the covering and see his bride's face, each took a piece of meat from a shared rice bowl to eat, but each drank wine from his or her own cup—although each cup was half of a split gourd. Eating and drinking together from the same bowl and sharing a split gourd conventionally symbolized the consummation of their life together as one.

Reflecting on the video and written liturgy of this approximately 32-minute ceremony, we observe that Zhang Xianglong as creator and Feng Zhe as master of ceremonies appeared to be the ones most interested in and pleased with the ceremony. Zhang had memorized his lines and spoke with energy into a microphone; although the bride's father also used a microphone, he used a prompt script for his lines. The two mothers appeared relatively stiff and uttered only a few words, barely audible and without a microphone. The groom remained somber until he lifted the bride's veil to symbolize the beginning of joining the bride in their ritualized life together; all of this sobriety and solemnity attracted the approval of the *fugu* revivalists.

Despite this intended solemn demeanor, the ceremony also included lighthearted notes from the happy couple. At the very beginning of the ceremony, when Feng explained the ancient term *nancong* 男从 ("men accompanying and servicing") and the Western-derived term *banlang* 伴郎 ("groomsmen"), the guests laughed, in part, we feel, because of the ironic disjuncture between the ancient language and the modern colloquialisms, with their Western etymologies. During the ceremony, the groom hesitated too long before thanking his future in-laws for the hand of their daughter; at that point, Feng reminded Tim of his need to express gratitude for so beautiful a bride. The guests laughed, perhaps at Feng's chiding manner and perhaps at the groom's obvious nervousness. Feng Zhe deliberately created humor and evoked audience laughter when the groom failed his first attempt to woo the bride with a poem; before Tim recited a second poem to gain the bride's assent, the MC cautioned that the second attempt had to be successful, or there would be difficulty. These tests to challenge the groom (which occurred offscreen in the Zhu wedding) often delight wedding guests and are in other weddings the occasion for the groom to distribute gifts of red envelopes to members of the community, who block access to the bride. Here, Feng exposed the irony of the staged nature of these tests (the success of which was already determined). After the unveiling, both bride and groom smiled slightly and relaxed as they ritually tasted their symbolic first meal together.

Such humorous points left us outside observers with the impression that despite its solemnity and kowtows, the Zhang wedding was still somewhat lighthearted. Although the MC had Zhang Xianglong's text with its profuse footnotes, the text was less evident in this performance than in the Zhu ceremony, where the parents had read their classical instructions from large scrolls. In the Zhang wedding, only the bride's father held a sheet of paper with his script, and the MC largely spoke his lines even though he had the five-page script in his hand. Moreover, the instructions he spoke were largely colloquialized as were some of those pronounced by the parents. Moreover, the MC partially explained any classical language as the ceremony progressed, so the language appeared less archaic and difficult to follow than the text on the scrolls read by the parents at the Zhu wedding. Those attending the Zhu wedding had access to the liturgical text with translations into modern Chinese, but Zhang Xianglong apparently did not distribute his text to the wedding guests. Furthermore, the speeches after the wedding ceremony were also relatively informal and light. For instance, the best man in a playful tone called upon Tim to explain how the couple first met. Furthermore, Professor Zhang's explanation of why he wanted to make the Confucian wedding was much shorter, more informal, less impassioned, and less political than Professor Zhu's.

Despite these notes of lightheartedness in the Zhang ceremony, many *fugu* proponents have warmly endorsed the Zhang ceremony over the Zhu ritual because they considered the Zhang ceremony more somber and symbolically correct. Such details as the Zhang bride wearing a red dress and head covering, and the groom dressed in black, the groom's overall sober or solemn manner, and all the numerous kowtows were points that were mentioned to us by *fugu* proponents. During our surveys of audiences in 2011, those critical of Zhu Jieren's modernized traditional ritual particularly criticized such details as the groom's failure to wear a hat, the unconventional color of the couple's clothing, and their smiles and apparent joyfulness (therefore judged as lacking reverential seriousness) during the ceremony. Although we noted that the Zhang bride smiled slightly (rather than exuberantly like the Zhu bride) before her head was covered and after the veil was removed, the *fugu* proponents apparently did not notice that distraction to the solemnity of the ceremony since her face was covered during most of the ceremony. In reality, the Zhang groom also did not wear a hat, but that detail has generally been overlooked, too. Some *fugu* proponents disparaged the music played during the Zhu wedding; however, the two weddings played some of the same music, including the Japanese band SIMS's "Palace Memories" from the movie soundtrack for "The Last Emperor." Thus, we conclude that criticism did not depend entirely on these elements, but that these elements helped contribute to critics' overall impression of the weddings as a whole.

More importantly, one proponent of the Zhang wedding condemned the Zhu wedding, in response to our presentation at Renmin University of China, for failing to have the most crucial element—leaders representing the Confucian revival of antiquity. As noted above, inviting two officials and eight dignitaries promoting the revival of Confucian values was suggested by Feng Zhe; moreover, these leading figures (invited at his expense) were the only guests he publicly introduced by name

and title just before the performance of the formal ceremony. Several of these dignitaries gave speeches during the banquet, and they offered a political commentary that Zhang Xianglong did not. (During our interview in 2010, the groom referred to the whole group of ten dignitaries as officials; however, in viewing the video, it became clear that not all ten were officials. Thanks to Professor Zhang's criticisms of our draft, we learned that only two were middle-level officials of cultural organs of the National People's Congress. However, the groom had probably used the term "officials" in the same way that the philosophers in our audience at Renda had when they praised Professor Zhang for including notable public intellectuals and government cadres known for promoting the revival of traditional Confucian culture.)

The groom's perspective on this group, which he referred to as "officials," is particularly noteworthy. During our interview with the groom, he said that he regretted that, when it came time to propose toasts, these *fugu* officials, who were utter strangers to the bride and groom, felt the urge to congratulate the couple on their preservation of Chinese traditions in the face of the onslaught of Western values. Just as Tim had worried most about his ethnically Manchu in-law's feelings toward the Confucian wedding ritual, he also worried about his non-Chinese guests' responses to the officials' toasts. The groom wanted to avoid offending some of their American friends from Yale who were also in attendance; fortunately, their friends responded good-naturedly to these "funny" speeches. We were impressed by the groom's considerate sensitivity about the possibility of excluding or alienating anyone. As a Chinese man who had attended college and studied Chinese economic history in the United States, the groom expressed a complex mixture of admiration for, and critique of, the pragmatism necessary to implement China's new economic policies. While clerking for a judge in Beijing, he regarded most officials as utilitarian and pragmatic, with a strong sense of statecraft. However, he also reasoned that such officials had to have a flexible moral compass in order to survive and rise through the ranks as officials. At one point, the groom distinguished these pragmatic officials from the *fugu* "fanatics," whom he disparaged as a small minority within the Communist Party that had arisen because of the vacuum of ideological authority in the wake of changes in the Communist order in China.

Yet, when asked his own personal religious beliefs, Tim surprised us by saying that his beliefs come closest to modern-day Confucianism. His reasons were pragmatic, rather than metaphysical or philosophical (which he assigned to his father). This answer surprised us because he had earlier said that he had accepted the Confucian wedding primarily because it meant so much to his father. He had remarked: "I was very happy to have such a wedding, but if it were not for my father, we would not have organized and orchestrated a traditional wedding." His reasons for resisting the wedding, however, were also pragmatic rather than philosophical. Since his wife's family from Shenyang was of Manchu descent, he had worried that her family would feel uncomfortable with a traditional Han Chinese wedding ritual. He expressed most ambivalence about the wedding because it required his bride's Manchu family to recite words and ordinances that they did not quite understand. Despite some hesitation from the bride, her parents agreed, so the young couple also accepted the wedding. Overall, by the measure of Zhang

Xianglong's purpose and design—through the participation in Confucian ritual ceremony to enhance his son's appreciation and commitment to Confucian values—was indeed a great success.

6.3 Personal Expression of Cosmic Love: The Lei Wedding

The second *fugu* wedding ritual (that we will examine) was created by a young couple, who were graduate students at Peking University and scholars of Song rituals, for their own wedding. Lei Bo 雷博, at that time a Ph.D. student in the Department of History, further modified the ancient wedding ritual that he had earlier designed for two other couples at the university. However, his bride Jinghui 菁慧,[6] a Ph.D. student in the Department of Philosophy, also had a voice in the design of their wedding. They had both been students in the same history course, but became better acquainted in a fellowship group that read and discussed the Confucian classics. This student group, called the Confucian Practice Society 儒行社, not only studies the Confucian classics, but also "practices" Confucian principles by living virtuous lives and teaching Confucian values in the Chinese countryside. Thus, this group and its members demonstrate that restoration of ancient Confucian rituals and values is not monopolized by elder patriarchs, but is also promoted by significant numbers of college and graduate students at the cosmopolitan and elite Peking University. The Lei wedding was held on July 2, 2011 in Beijing at Yunfengshan Hotel 云峰山官,[7] a garden restaurant that was owned by a Taiwanese woman who was a close friend of the couple.[8] Thus, the Lei wedding was the only one of the three weddings that occurred outdoors and during the daytime. Although the model can and has occurred in an indoor hall, this particular instance of this wedding model included naturalistic elements such as a half-chopped wood stump representing Confucius; these naturalistic elements reinforced the couple's emphasis on "cosmic love" with Confucian characteristics.

Lei Bo and Jinghui were aware of both Zhu Jieren's and Zhang Xianglong's wedding rituals, but were not completely satisfied with either model. The young couple was uncomfortable with the degree to which the senior scholars had focused on the authority of the parents and the obedience of the newlyweds because that level of parental command did not appropriately reflect the modern world. More importantly, they wanted their wedding ritual to reflect their own love toward one another and set in the context of cosmic love. They based their sense of cosmic love upon the "Western Inscription" 西铭 (*Ximing*) written by Zhang Zai 张载 (1020–1077). Their brochure also highlighted Zhang Zai's lines: "Heaven is my father, and Earth

[6] Surname omitted at bride's request.

[7] For more information about this location, please see: http://www.yunfengshan.com.

[8] We interviewed the new couple on July 12, 2011, and they also showed us the wedding video on their computer and gave us the one-page brochure setting forth the three phases of their ceremony.

is my mother," and "all people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions."[9] In addition, their primary sources were the classic *Ceremonials and Rituals* 仪礼 (*Yili*), the classic *Book of Poetry* 诗经 (*Shijing*), *The Kaiyuan Ritual Code* 大唐开元礼 (*Da Tang Kaiyuan li*, of 732), and the *Zhuzi jiali*. These classical texts served as the research base of their restoration of Confucian antiquity ceremony; however, they did not read classical texts from handheld scrolls as had been done in the Zhu wedding, and their one-page brochure did not include the scholarly footnotes of the liturgical text provided by Zhang Xianglong.

The principal innovation to express their love was the first of the three phases of the ceremony, a phase that sought to symbolize how numerous friends played roles making introductions and connections. This prelude began with Lei Bo accompanied by his best friend, walking down the garden path to a gate representing the entrance to the bride's dwelling. Lei Bo gave his letter and his representative betrothal gift to his attendant, who then presented it to Jinghui's female attendant who in turn took it up the stairs to her. In our interview, we learned that the couple had, for the two previous days, sharply disagreed regarding these details in the ceremony. Jinghui remarked that she was so nervous and anxious that she called her attendants by the wrong names as they all helped one another with makeup. Yet, as soon as the door opened and the music began, she was calm as she descended the steps, followed by her two attendants. The music was drawn from some music scores including "Palace Memories." Like Zhu Jieren, Jinghui observed that traditional Chinese music was so dominated by flute and strings that it was difficult to find appropriate wedding music.

During the second phase, the couple kowtowed first to the Heavens and Earth, secondly to Confucius as First Teacher, thirdly to their parents, and fourthly to their teachers—represented by Lei Bo's principal mentor Professor Liu Pujiang 刘浦江 (1961–2015), in whose class the couple had first met. Thus, the ceremony formally began with burning incense and kowtowing to the Heavens and the Earth, a major consideration for *fugu* proponents, because this ritual acknowledged the authority and priority of the Heavens and Earth. Fugu proponents, particularly in our audience at Remin University of China, often fault Zhu Jieren's wedding ritual for centering on reporting to the ancestors and having the couple merely bow to the Heavens and Earth only at the end of the ceremony; they claimed that prioritizing Heaven and Earth placed the ceremony in the context of a Confucian cosmological world rather than a merely Confucian family wedding. Nevertheless, the Lei couple expressed to us their discomfort with characterizations of "the authority of the Heavens and Earth," and instead "considered all life, feelings and virtues to have their source in the Heavens and Earth." In paying their respects to Confucius, the Lei couple kowtowed to a block of wood with Confucius' title carved on the half face; their Confucian focus could be seen as even more pronounced than in the Zhang wedding because homage to Confucius took priority over respect to parents. In the process of thanking their parents, the groom's mother and the bride's father

[9] *Zhang Zai ji* 张载集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1978), p. 62; 正蒙•乾称篇第十七。Translated in Wing-tsit Chan (1963).

gave short speeches; moreover, the groom's mentor also gave a short speech in response to their respect for their teachers. Their master of ceremonies, who was a fellow student rather than a professional, used rhythmical prose, prepared beforehand, to chant instructions, so his speech as less colloquial than Feng Zhe's at the Zhang wedding and less artificial than the professional MC's at the Zhu wedding.

During the third phase, the couple used traditional conventional practices to symbolize their joining together in a new family relationship. They ate a bite of rice from a shared bowl and drank wine from split gourd bowls. In our interview with the couple, we learned that a major aspect of their wedding was practicing how to perform the rituals in a way that would appropriately express their reverence and seriousness. For instance, when the bride presented the groom a lock of her hair and he gave her a gem from his belt, they practiced raising the gift to forehead level while bowing and without looking at the other person, extending their arms with gift in hands out toward the other.

This manner of exchanging gifts was obviously the special moment of "traditional choreography" for the Lei wedding—like the Zhu Jieren's focus on the exchange of cups or Zhang Xianglong's invention of having the groom take nine steps backward to symbolize the rotation of the cart wheels for a specific number of miles when bringing the bride to the Zhang household. Although to a Western bystander, such ritualized presenting of one's gift might well appear too rehearsed and artificial (often ending with a flourish of the hand), *fugu* proponents pay particular attention to such ritualized mannerisms, as evidenced in some of their criticisms of the Zhu wedding couple. Zhu Jieren took some pride in the simplicity of his ritual, so the MC walked the wedding party through the ceremony only once beforehand. However, *fugu* advocates read the performance of his ritual as lacking in proper seriousness and sincerity. On a similar note, Lei Bo's wedding would avoid criticism from *fugu* proponents by having the couple don traditionally colored clothing and hats and especially by having their facial expressions focused on conveying the seriousness of the occasion. In the Lei wedding, everyone appears *jing* 敬 (reverent and serious), and no one appears to smile—even the slight smiles by the couple in the Zhang ceremony. Jinghui told us that her mother looked down at the ground during most of the ceremony because she was so moved to tears. Furthermore, as if aware of criticism of other traditional weddings, Lei Bo did not use any professional MC or commercial wedding company; moreover, he and his bride saw no need for a supplemental Westernized ceremony because their wedding gave special attention to their expression of both commitment and love. The Lei couple planned to re-perform the wedding for his relatives in Taiyuan, but they would only hold a wedding banquet and present the wedding video and photos for her family in Ningbo. Jinghui explained that the wedding ceremony is appropriate only at the turf of the husband, not at the bride's, because she leaves home to marry into the husband's family.

To us, an even more central aspect of the traditional aspect of Confucianism that Lei Bo and Jinghui repeatedly emphasized was the personal or spiritual component of their reason for doing an antique version of the Confucian wedding ritual. Their major point was that they approached and utilized the rituals as though both of them

were "literati" 士人 (*shiren*) or "persons of integrity" 君子 (*junzi*, conventionally glossed as "gentlemen"). They articulated the core Confucian concept that anyone possesses the capacity to become a good or complete person. They cultivated themselves though the traditional clothing, rituals, and mannerisms of the ceremony. We might add that although their mannerisms did in places have the flair of performance that might appear artificial to a Western observer, they reflected traditional Chinese sense of aesthetics and Confucian cultivation.

In response to questions regarding the authority of the ritual, the young couple articulated Confucian views regarding how traditional forms captured the most appropriate manner of expressing what was in the heart and mind. They noted that the spiritual element of ritual was different from the Christian view because in Confucianism there was no personal god, but only the cosmic and virtuous presence of the Heavens and Earth, so there was no need for priestly authority. Thus, the couple was articulate and thoughtful about why and how they performed the ritual and what they wanted to convey to one another and to their guests.

Lei Bo's Confucian wedding offers personal expressions of love (such as being described as "an intimate friend's two puppies") to a degree that provides a marked contrast to the other weddings. It is significant that the young couple formulated the ritual themselves, instead of following the wishes and directions of the father of the groom, as in the Zhang and Zhu weddings. Moreover, the key in Lei Bo's ceremony was not to express the union of families or to counter Western influence, but rather to express their love for one another and to contextualize it within the Zhang Zai sense of oneness with the cosmos. Some Confucian proponents, including Zhang Xianglong and Zhu Jieren, object to Lei Bo's downplaying of the family, the parents' authority, and the nation.

The difference between personal expression in the Lei wedding and group identity in the Zhu wedding (or communal symbols in the Zhang wedding) is, we believe, significant and representative. One young scholar of Lei Bo's generation remarked to us that she saw a stark distinction between Zhu Jieren's and Zhang Xianglong's weddings and Lei Bo's: the older generation retains the "Enlightenment" mentality of awakening the masses and redressing past injustices, but young people—unburdened by the baggage of China's international humiliation and the weight of the Cultural Revolution—are freer to engage in dialogue about their own ideas about culture, identity and tradition.[10] Our friend thus engages in the Levensonian idea that "international humiliation" has led Chinese scholars to devalue their own history, and to seek universal significance through Western enlightenment. As we noted in a previous article, Zhu Jieren escapes Levenson's predicament (of choosing between the personal significance of Chinese civilization and the universal value of nation-building) by asserting the relevance of Confucian values to the Communist state. Furthermore, we have seen young people in the Confucian Practice Society actively teaching traditional values among schoolchildren in the countryside; in ways that sometimes mirror the Communist youth before

[10] Conversation with Dr. Yao Yonghui, visiting scholar at ASU from Hangzhou Normal University, June 13, 2012; her Qinghua University dissertation focused on rituals.

them, these young, new Confucians see the countryside as both the source and the object of the transformative power of ideological values. They seem to believe that there is a truth, and that it can be found in the Confucian tradition.

When our friend notes the generational differences between an Enlightenment-oriented older generation and a liberated younger generation, we feel that she is responding less to the issue of truth-claims in Enlightenment thinking among young people, and more to methods of moral suasion among the older generation. By focusing on personal expression, the Lei wedding circumscribes its implicit statements about even cosmic love within the context of one particular case. In contrast, the Zhu wedding explicitly implicates the entire Zhu clan and even the surrounding society with the liturgical vows of the marriage union. Because the Lei wedding (relative to the other weddings) focuses on personal expression, Lei Bo is able to circumvent some of the inherent contradictions of paying homage to parental authority and ancestral demands within a modern context of free choice and women's liberation, which is a source of tension in the Zhu wedding. Thus, the Lei wedding appears to be "free" of some of the tensions of the various "truth claims" of the Zhu wedding

Finally, we would like to note that these generational differences do not seem to result from Western influence. Lei Bo and Jinghui, who received their entire education within China, rejected a focus on parental authority; in contrast, despite years of higher education in the United States, the Zhang couple and the Zhu groom accepted parental direction in orchestrating their weddings, and they also accepted parental authority in performing their weddings. Overall, these wedding rituals illustrate the complexity and diversity of the Confucian revival in contemporary China. Against this background, we turn to Zhu Jieren's modernized version of Zhu Xi's wedding ritual.

6.4 Particular and Equal: The Zhu Wedding

In the context of this spectrum of *fugu* rituals, the Zhu wedding appears to be committed not only to a more particular version of Confucianism (i.e., Zhu Xi culture or *Zhuzi wenhua* 朱子文化) but also to a more positive embrace of gender equality. Because we have described the Zhu wedding elsewhere, this section will focus on comparisons with the two *fugu* weddings in Beijing and the responses of the more conservative members in our audiences to the Zhu wedding as at once too particularistic and too modern (especially in terms of its expression of gender equality). In its attempts to satisfy the needs of both traditional morality and modern equality, the Zhu wedding has attracted the criticism of both *fugu* moralists and some feminists within our audiences in China.

First, many *fugu* proponents object to Zhu Jieren's adherence to his ancestor Zhu Xi's liturgical rituals. For these critics, Zhu Xi is only one among a number of sages, and *fugu* revivalists should turn to other, more ancient (and therefore more authentic) models of ritual propriety, as Zhang Xianglong and Lei Bo did. While we

would agree that Zhu Xi should not eclipse other important figures, these critics generally downplay the importance of Zhu Xi's legacy in shaping Confucianism and family rituals in the late imperial period. Furthermore, we agreed with Zhu Jieren that Zhu Xi offered a model for *adapting* ancient ritual to current times. The fundamental philosophical difference between Zhu Jieren and other proponents of Confucian culture is that others emphasize their role in preserving, rather than modernizing, ritual. After reading our essay, Zhu confirmed that he rejected the *fugu* approach to restoring antiquity and even asserted that in China, "*fugu* has no future!"

Upon reading our essay and viewing the Zhang wedding video, Zhu Jieren remarked that ancestors were not evident in the Zhang and Lei weddings; thus, he questioned how they could regard their weddings as authentic revivals of Confucian antiquity. Furthermore, although Zhang Zai's conception of cosmic love was important philosophically, Zhu Jieren asserted that the basis of Confucian weddings was ancestors and family—not nature and cosmos. Like Zhu Xi, Zhu Jieren has combined a focus on the core liturgical texts and adaptations that enhance the practicality and use of the core rituals in a new era. For instance, he criticizes the convention of covering the bride's face for two reasons. First, this custom lacks textual basis in the classics. Second, this conventional practice in Late Imperial China reflected the social reality of that era when the bride's appearance was totally unknown to the groom before the lifting of the veil; however, it is a meaningless and cumbersome gesture in modern Chinese society, where women are not rigidly isolated and where young people can get acquainted before committing to marriage. Even people seeking to introduce prospective couples often provide photos and a banquet where the prospective couple can meet, so there is no longer a mystery about the bride's facial appearance even in an "arranged" marriage.

After reading Zhu Jieren's comments, Professor Zhang Xianglong offered a response that succinctly summarizes much of a view that was also articulated by some people in our Chinese audiences, especially by the philosophers at Renda; moreover, Professor Zhang's response illustrates our point about significant distinctions between Zhu Jieren's modernized version of Zhu Xi's wedding ceremony and Zhang's efforts in Beijing to revive what he regarded as a more purely ancient version of Confucian rituals. Professor Zhang's pointed criticism deserves to be quoted: Your essay mentions that Mr. Zhu Jieren criticized the Zhang family and Lei family weddings for not giving prominence to the ancestors, and thus he doubts their Confucian character. I do not agree with the Lei family wedding's way of stressing personal feelings, but Zhu's criticism of our family wedding is completely untenable. Ancient wedding rituals, including Zhu Xi's Family Rituals, regard the parents as representing the clan lineage and the ancestors, which is explicitly communicated in the father's statement, "to continue my ancestral service," and essentially all other ritual ceremonies latently embody the meaning of linking the past and the future and continuing the family; thus, all this is regarded by Confucians as offering the greatest reverence and satisfaction to the ancestors. From your article, the Zhu family wedding merely has some outward appearance of Zhu Xi's ceremony, while its interior is a sort of hodgepodge of values. At the end, adding a Westernized wedding makes this kind of confused mixture even more evident. In my judgment, among

these three weddings, only the Zhang family wedding is Confucian. The Zhu style wedding certainly does not possess the modern vitality that he imagines; because if it is okay to liberalize and even Christianize to such a hodgepodged degree, couples are themselves then free to design anything, just like Mr. Lei did, so why must we mingle everything to be in accord with the Zhu family pattern? In this contemporary atmosphere of lifeless rituals and lewd music, all weddings with traditional flavor are marginal; however, only talents maintaining the Confucian spirit of "Heavens & Earth, Parents, and Sagely Teacher" are able to possess the vitality to endure being left all alone and yet persevere.

文章后边提　到, 朱杰人先生批评张氏和雷氏婚礼没有突出祖先地位, 并由此怀疑它们的儒家性　质。我对雷氏婚礼突出个人感受的做法是不同意的, 但朱的这个批评对于我们这个　婚礼完全不成　立。因为儒家古代的婚礼, 包括《朱子家礼》, 都是以父母亲来代表家族和祖先, 而且通过父亲　的话(“承我宗事”)明确传达了这个意思, 而且其他　　的几乎所有仪式都潜藏着承先启后、延续家　族的意思, 而这被儒家认为是对祖先最高的尊崇和满足。从此文章看来, 朱氏婚礼徒有一些朱熹　仪式的外表, 其内瓤却是 一种价值的混杂。后边再加一个西式婚礼使这种混杂性更突出。按我的　判断, 这三个婚礼中, 只有张氏婚礼是儒家的。朱式婚礼也不会有他想像的现代生命力, 因　为,　如果能自由化、甚至基督教化到那么混杂的程度, 新人们也就可以自己去设计了, 如雷氏一样, 何苦必须按朱氏方式去混杂?在此礼崩乐坏的时代氛围中, 有传　统色彩的婚礼都是边缘的, 但只　有保持“天地亲君师”的儒家灵魂的才会有孤独但坚持自身的生命力。[11]

Here, Professor Zhang articulately defends his approach to restoring a relatively purist vision of ancient Confucian rituals in contrast to Zhu Jieren's compromises with modern Western influences.

Like several people in our audiences, however, Professor Zhang perceives the young Zhu couple's Chinese version of a Western wedding as being "Christian" and even officiated by a priest in a church – although almost any Western observer would regard the Zhu couple's Western ceremony as devoid of any religiously Christian content or significance. That misimpression apparently provokes some Chinese traditionalists to portray the Zhu Confucian model as "mixed" or "polluted"; moreover, allowing the young Zhu couple to have a simplified and secular Western ceremony to express love has given ritual purists grounds for rejecting the viability of Zhu Jieren's ritual model for achieving his goals. Zhu seeks to demonstrate the compatibility of Zhu Xi's Confucian principles with modern society and their relevant contributions to universal values.

Zhu Jieren believes he solves the problem of combining the ancient with the modern by preserving the liturgical text, but extending flexibility to other, additional elements. For Zhu Jieren, it is the liturgical text that is the source of integrity, handed down from generation to generation; when contemporary people speak these words and enact these commands, they embody traditional principles and values. Despite the liturgical similarities between the Zhu and the Zhang ceremonies, they differed

[11] Quoted from Professor Zhang's June email to his son, who forwarded it to us, so we could better understand Professor Zhang's standpoint.

aesthetically and structurally. As long as the element of liturgical text remains at the center of the Confucian ritual, Zhu Jieren could compromise on other items, like the color of wedding vestments. The style of wedding vestments is, all around the world, historically contingent,[12] and Zhu's flexibility is in part a reflection of his awareness of these historical changes; as he noted, his son and daughter-in-law could choose from among the styles of any dynasty they wished. It was only when Zhu Jieren believed that he had *rediscovered* an ancient choreography in Song texts, i.e., in the exchange of the cups, that he particularly reduplicated it. Zhu Jieren wanted to transmit traditions rather than to create them; beyond such textually based transmissions, Zhu was not particularly wedded to any set of symbols and could be free to allow his children to "add" to the core of these traditions in any way that they wanted, even with a Westernized ceremony.

Here, we would like to place Zhu Jieren's viewpoint within a larger historical framework. We believe that Zhu Jieren, like his ancestor Zhu Xi, wants to modernize ritual to include traditional values within the larger framework of modern society, rather than merely to revive ancient norms and ritual practices. Although we agree with Professor Christian de Pee that Zhu Xi adhered to ancient principles and an internal logic while modernizing ritual,[13] we also believe that Zhu Xi (especially after his debates with Chen Liang) distanced himself from Zhang Zai and others who wished to revive the "well-field" (*jingtian* 井田) system and other ancient systems.[14] (The Lei wedding quoted Zhang Zai's orientation toward the universe rather than his revival of ancient customs, but, nevertheless, they align themselves with this more strictly antiquarian tradition.) Thus, within the context of revivalists, Zhu Xi took a moderate position of simplifying ancient rituals to accommodate the social realities of his era. Likewise, we feel that Zhu Jieren adapts key elements of the ritual—such as changing full prostrating kowtows to merely kneeling and then bowing—that are insufficiently "purist" for other revivalists in contemporary China; as Zhang articulated, they view his combination of ancient and new symbols as a form of ethical syncretism. Furthermore, Zhu Jieren welcomes "additions" to the core ritual in a way that harkens back to the moderate modernizers of the late Qing period. These modernizers famously argued that "Western utility" could aid the core of Chinese essence in the *ti/yong* 体用formulation. Many of the earliest proponents of this "ti/yong formulation" were from coastal regions with relatively strong foreign influence; likewise, Zhu Jieren's glitzy Shanghai wedding is distasteful to many

[12] For instance, John Gillis argues that many of our cultural assumptions, such as the association of pink with girls, are the result of Victorian or post-Victorian history; see *A World of Their Own Making: Myth, Ritual, and the Quest for Family Values* (New York: Basic books, 1996). While arguing for the historical contingency of cultural meaning, an audience drawn mostly from the Philosophy Department of the Renmin University of China argued that we, and Zhu Jieren, simply failed to understand the proper language of folk customs. Helpfully, they pointed to the work of Wang Zuoxin王作新. Although Wang sometimes offers temporal or geographic specificity for the historical practices that he surveys, he offers "dictionaries" of these customs, which anchors meaning to specific words, rather than delineating the ways in which these practices have varied over time: see Wang Zuoxin (2001, 2009).

[13] See Christian de Pee (2007).

[14] See Hoyt Cleveland Tillman (1982, 1994).

fugu proponents, who consider the commercial beauty of the Shanghai wedding to be a symptom of moral decay and Westernized influence. In contrast, the two Beijing weddings were relatively subdued, with an amalgam of different Chinese symbols and practices. These differences in taste reflect the larger historical cultural divide between Shanghai and Beijing. Not merely China's foremost entrepôt for outside influences, Shanghai quickly became a unique city that projected its own, Chinese vision of modernity[15]; Shanghai thus challenged the old capital's relatively staid structures of power. Thus, this historical context helps to condition fugu proponents to interpret the glitz of Shanghai modernity as a threat to traditional values.

In contrast to Zhu Jieren, Zhang could use symbols to recreate spatial and temporal context in creative ways because he had confidence in their cosmological rather than socially constructed meaning. Even when Zhang orchestrated choreography himself, he believed in the immutability of the symbols and their ability to represent spatial and temporal distance. These symbols gesture toward creating a context that may or may not be readily visible to the audience, but the Zhang bride and groom took those steps to undertake an emotional journey in family life. Surprisingly, it may be Zhang's expertise in Daoist imagery, with its emphasis on the profound meaning of color, space, and time cycles, that influenced his use of such symbolism in the wedding ceremony. In contrast, it is the absence of spatial and temporal context that further highlights Zhu Jieren's efforts to promote gender equality in his wedding. In the Zhu wedding, the bride and her bridesmaids enter the hall in a grand procession; both the anticipation for the bride and the appearance of the bride draw special attention to her in the Zhu wedding. Furthermore, the bridal procession, down a central aisle, mirrors the Western ceremony and renders the hall akin to the Christian nave, to which some in our Chinese audience objected because they mistakenly regarded the setting as a "church" and the MC as a "priest." Without the context of journeying to the bridal home in Zhu Jieren's model, the groom's kneeling and bowing to the bride's mother appears to be an extra step of reverence on his part, especially since the bride did not individually pay this level of formal respect to the groom's parents. The appearance of undue respect for the bride's family does not bother Zhu Jieren because of its historical basis in Zhu Xi's family ritual.

In "A Joyful Union," we emphasized that Zhu Jieren tried, within the confines of adhering to historical precedent, to adapt the ancient ritual to modern notions of gender equality. We have seen in responses to the wedding that this dedication to gender equality is perhaps unique or peripheral to many *fugu* intellectuals. For example, some noted that in their villages, brides should weep for an entire day because of the loss of their natal homes and the seriousness of the wedding vow. The bride's obvious joy in the Zhu wedding underscored the point that she happily entered into marriage. It is difficult to know how *fugu* intellectuals will handle the issue of gender equality, if only by looking the other way at the slight smiles of brides who are in reality educated professionals. Lei Bo and Jinghui solved this problem by, in effect, neutralizing gender between the bride and groom and emphasizing their "personhood" instead. Thus, the young couple has returned to the

[15] Wen-hsin Yeh (2007), and Leo Ou-fan Lee (1999).

Chinese Communist aesthetic that equated gender equality with gender neutrality. Likewise, they emphasized "sagehood" in a way that confirms traditional Confucian values and sidesteps the issue of Western individualism. The Lei wedding thus attracts the approval of some young people, not only because it downplays parental authority, but more importantly, because it potentially transcends the preoccupations of the older generation.

Yet, the Zhu wedding is trying to confront rather than resolve these tensions and problems with modern China's revival of traditional values. By championing the universalistic qualities of Zhu-lineage Confucian culture, Zhu Jieren is trying to assert a new standard. With its combination of Zhu-lineage particularism and modern equality, the Zhu wedding ritual reverses many Western scholars' expectations about the "universalistic" qualities of modernity; just as the emergence of a modern, yet distinctively Chinese, state contradicts Western models of development, the reinvention of modern, yet particularly Chinese, ritual also undermines the "universalistic" language of the West to describe and analyze culture.

6.5 Conclusion

Aptly quoting from the *Laozi*'s critique of Confucianism, one student in China highlighted the inherent difficulty he saw in modern efforts to revitalize ritual as step to promote morality and rectify society:

> Therefore, only when the Way is lost does [talk of] virtue arise.
> Only when virtue is lost does humaneness arise.
> Only when humaneness is lost does [talk of] rightness arise.
> Only when rightness is lost does ritual propriety arise.
> Now, ritual is the superficial expression of loyalty and faithfulness, and the beginning of disorder.[16]

These powerful lines acknowledge that various efforts to promote Confucian rituals are responses to national weakness rather than strength. When some are claiming that China is enjoying a period of "ascendency" 盛世 (*shengshi*), both Zhu-culture revivalists and *fugu* leaders point in different ways to the instability that has accompanied economic reforms in contemporary China. For Zhu Jieren and many other intellectuals, China has paid for its economic prosperity with social instability, as the "ills" of Western consumerism accompany commercial products into China. Tim Zhang sees in these reforms a need to turn to a pragmatism that is at once practically necessary and morally debilitating. When officials and cadres toasted the Zhang wedding, they expressed the need to remain Chinese perhaps precisely because it is now so difficult to define "Chineseness."

Yet, in the context of this critique of individualism and consumerism, these wedding participants have tried to forge a new union with the past. In order to counter the individualism that Zhu Jieren disparages, the young Lei Bo and Jinghui have

[16] *Laozi* 38; cf. translations Wing-tsit Chan (1963) and de Bary and Bloom (1999).

emphasized instead the "deeply personal" character of their connection to cosmic love and the Heavens and Earth. In their claim to be "Heideggerian Confucians,"[17] the Lei couple attempts to synthesize Euro-American and Chinese philosophies. Zhang Xianglong also sees a synthesis between Heidegger and Zhuangzi in their approaches to serving and mutually harmonizing with the environment, rather than being served by the environment. Zhang and Lei emphasize Heidegger perhaps in part because they also value of native folk customs and the rural, agricultural focus often idealized in the the Chinese classics. All of these thoughtful intellectuals are negotiating a new synthesis between East and West as they strive to create a new sense of what it means to be both a modern Chinese and a traditional "classicist" (*ruzhe*) 儒者 in the post-reform of a Communist state.

Whereas the Western term "Confucian" places Confucius at the center of the Chinese tradition, the Chinese term "*Ru*" 儒 refers more broadly to "classicists" distinguished by their dedication to ancient Confucian texts; the authors of these weddings differ in the degrees to which each places family lineage or Confucius at the center of the classical tradition. Marginalized in his own time, Confucius today represents state power and personal success (especially academic aspirations) in the eyes of many ordinary people. At the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai, for example, many Chinese posed with a huge, glittering golden statue of Confucius, but Zhu Xi was relegated to a digital footnote in the Fujian exhibit. Zhu Jieren would like to turn attention to textual classics, as represented by Zhu Xi, to find the moral core behind the obvious glitter of state glory. For Zhu Jieren, particularism and universalism converge in the figure of Zhu Xi, whose family lineage offers personal connection and whose moral values offer universal application. Many *fugu* proponents view his ceremony as strictly particularistic rather than universal, in ways that undermine the idea of a new Chinese standard for global values. Eschewing Zhu Jieren's humanistic rather than cosmic values, the Zhang and Lei weddings pay greater homage to "the Heavens and Earth" and "cosmic love" than to ancestry. Even though the young couple in both the Zhang and Lei wedding ceremonies kowtow to Confucius, the Lei wedding most explicitly expresses reverence to Confucius, represented by his title written on a carved, wooden block. When the figure of Confucius appears—in weddings, the World Expo, Tian'anmen, or in a corner of the National Museum's courtyard—it is important not only to recognize his "universalistic" symbolism but to uncover his particularistic meanings as well.

References

Zhu Jieren 朱杰人, "Zhuzi Jiali: cong wenben dao shiyan – yi hunli wei li" 朱子家礼:从文本到实验——以婚礼为例 (Zhu Xi's Family Rituals: From Text to Trial Performance), in Chen Lai and Zhu Jieren, eds., *Renwen yu jiazhi*, pp. 211–224.

Andrew Jacobs, "Confucius Statue Vanishes Near Tiananmen Square," *The New York Times*, April 22, 2011, sec. World / Asia Pacific, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/23/world/asia/23confucius.html?_r=1.

[17] See also Cheung Chan Fai 张灿辉 (1998).

Chen Lai 陈来and Zhu Jieren 朱杰人, eds., *Renwen yu jiazhi* 人文与价值 (*Humanities and Values*), (Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2011), pp. 225–241.
Zhu Xi 朱熹, Zhuzi quanshu 朱子全书 (Complete works of Zhu Xi), edited by Zhu Jieren, Yan Zuozhi 严佐之, Liu Yongxiang 刘永翔, Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, and Hefei: Anhui jiaoyu chubanshe, 2003, Volume 7, juan 3.
Chu Hsi (Zhu Xi), *Chu Hsi's Family Rituals: A Twelfth-Century Chinese Manual for the Performance of Cappings, Weddings, Funerals, and Ancestral Rites* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).
Yin Hui 殷慧: "Zhu Xi lixue sixiang yanjiu" 朱熹礼学思想研究 (Research on Zhu Xi's Thought about Ritual Studies), Ph.D. dissertation, Hunan University, 2009.
Zhang Xianglong 张祥龙, "Is Political Confucianism a Universalism: An Analysis of Jiang Qing's Philosophical Tendency," in Ruiping Fan, ed., The Renaissance of Confucianism in Contemporary China (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), pp. 225–237.
Jiang Qing 蒋庆, *Zhengzhi ruxue* 政治儒学 (Political Confucianism) (Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing [Sanlian]: 2004.
Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 497.
Wang Zuoxin 王作新, *Yu Yan Min Su* 语言民俗 [The Language of Customs] (Wuhan Shi: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001).
Christian de Pee, *The Writing of Weddings in Middle-period China: Text and Ritual Practice in the Eighth Through Fourteenth Centuries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007).
Hoyt Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 42–44.
Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book of Chinese Philosophy*, 158; Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 2nd edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), vol. 1, p. 87
Cheung Chan Fai 张灿辉, "The Chinese Reception of Heidegger's Philosophy," paper presented in the International Conference on Translation Conceptions of the German Classical Philosophy of the Century, organized by St. Petersburg Association of Scientist and Scholars, 1998. http://dspace.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/handle/2006/26605.
Margaret Mih Tillman and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, "A Joyful Union: The Modernization of the Zhu Xi Family Wedding Ceremony," Oriens Extremus, No. 49, (2010), pp. 115–142.
Chen Lai and Zhu Jieren, eds., *Zhexue yu shidai* 哲学与时代 (Philosophy and Times) (Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2012).
Wang Zuoxin, *Sanxia Xia Kou Fang Yan Ci Hui Yu Min Su* 三家口放言词汇与民俗 [Dialect Vocabulary and Folk Custom in the Entrance Districts of the Three Gorges] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2009).
Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Ch'en Liang on Law and the Public Interest* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), pp. 49–54.
Wen-hsin Yeh, Shanghai Splendor: Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843–1949 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
Leo Ou-fan Lee, Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930–1945 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Part III
Liang Shuming: Joining the Worlds of Thought and Action

Chapter 7
Liang Shuming: A Lifelong Activist

Guy Alitto

> *"I often express to people that I am not a scholar…I admit that I am a person with ideas, and moreover am a person who implements them, who puts them into practice."*
>
> Will Man Survive, (2006) p. 89

"I am not purely a thinker. I am a practicer. I am someone who goes all out to do things. I've been in action for all that I am worth my whole life." (Liang Shuming, address before the Academy of Chinese Culture, "Conference on the Academic Thought of Liang Shuming," November 1987. This was his last public appearance before his death.)

2013 is the 120th anniversary of Liang Shuming's (1893–1988) birth. Known to history primarily as a philosopher, his life and its meaning might be interpreted in completely different ways. Was he primarily a religious philosopher, as suggested by Professor Thierry Meynard's biography of him, subtitled *The Hidden Buddhist?* Or was he primarily a modern "Confucian" revivalist, as my biography of him, *The Last Confucian* suggests? Or, was he primarily what we would call today an "activist," devoted to finding and carrying out solutions to China's and humanity's concrete problems? In exploring solutions to these problems, Liang's thought did have philosophical content, but it was not strictly philosophical in form. Liang did not, as, for example, Xiong Shili did, seek to establish his own philosophical system, but he did sometimes used philosophical concepts and language in expressing what he considered the problems and their solutions.

Although I personally think that in fact he was all three (and more), I would argue here that his "core" was that of "activist." He was a figure far more like Gandhi than Heidegger. Gandhi of course was also a "thinker" and his thought would be said to have philosophical content, but his image in history is that of an activist.

Liang began life under special circumstances. It was not just that this family of scholar officials could trace their origin to the Yuan royal house. It was his father's

G. Alitto (✉)
University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA
e-mail: galitto@uchicago.edu

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*, China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_7

life and character (probably his mother's as well, though we know very little about hers). The father, Liang Ji, did indeed carry on the centuries-old family tradition of winning a degree and serving as an official. Because of his utter devotion to traditional "Confucian" moral principles and his equally extreme devotion to radical reformist activism, his career did not bring him wealth. He refused to join in officialdom's intense corruption scramble at the end of the Qing Dynasty and, devoting his energies to patriotic/moral activism instead, relegated his family to a life of shabby gentility. Liang Ji, however, was a talented calligrapher (as was his son Shuming) and, unable to carry on with his small official salary, earned money by that art, writing out the texts of others.

I would argue here that the "real" Liang Shuming was, above all, an activist of stern moral rectitude uncompromisingly insistent on independence of thought, exactly as his father was. Liang's later famous mottos "Independent thinking" and "the way I think is the way I act" and vice versa were nurtured in childhood.

Liang Ji's radical reformist activism most certainly manifests both of these to a high degree. He was above all an independent thinker. In his activist efforts to raise both the patriotism and moral efforts in founding newspapers, revising traditional opera into modern patriotic ones, starting schools for the unemployed, and so on, he had no he certainly had no close collaborators except for his friend Peng Yisun. Generally speaking, Liang Ji was a contrarian of sorts who emphasized results and stressed solution to problems and action in the real world. He dismissed mere scholars and litterateurs as useless ornaments and held ineffective officials in contempt. Generally supportive of Liang Qichao's program toward reform of political institutions, he was not much impressed by the theoretical constructs presented by him or his teacher, Kang Youwei. What he admired most in Liang Qichao was his personal character. I dare not speculate how much Liang Ji's penchant toward action stemmed from his own father, who died serving as an official fighting the Nian rebels, but I am certain about his influence on his son Shuming. As a student, Shuming was a notable contrarian, early developing a flair for controverting the generally accepted and was quite free with his criticism of established opinion. This elicited an evaluation from his teacher that he was someone "who delights in maliciously opposing the others." Following his father again, Shuming was obstinately unappreciative of any of the treasures of China's literary heritage. "There was not one I did not despise." Liang Ji quite aptly gave him the nickname "my very image." Shuming in fact carried his contrarianism so far as to "maliciously oppose" his family's devotion to Beijing opera. He told me (between chuckles) that it was precisely because the entire family was opera fans; he went out of his way to oppose it.

Another like-father-like-son trait was a persistent and scrupulous pursuit of moral perfection. This enterprise of forging oneself into an ethical paragon of inner spiritual perfection and outward propriety was a lifelong obsession with Liang Ji, and he set the most stringent standards of proper conduct for himself. Shuming followed suit, which earned him another nickname that his schoolmates gave him "the proud" (self-righteous).

I most point out that Liang Ji inspired such filial emulation precisely because he did not compel it. Again manifesting his own independent nature, Liang Chi consciously cultivated a friendly, spontaneous relationship with his children, urged them to talk freely with him, and actively sought out their opinions. He purposefully encouraged them to develop an unconventional spirit of independence and taught them to hold their own opinions even in the face of parental opposition. Unlike most fathers of the May Fourth generation of intellectuals, Liang Chi refused to beat or bully his son, thus providing him with no firm authority against which to struggle. Liang Shuming was forced to act as his own authority figure and punisher.

The most dramatic scene in Liang's youth that demonstrated Liang Ji's uncommon method of raising children was when Shuming announced that he intended to be celibate for life. His mother, literally on her deathbed, in tears and wringing his hand, tried to dissuade him for such a course. The next day, Liang Ji wrote a note to Shuming, which dismissed his mother's pleadings as stemming from her illness and her own selfishness to see grandchildren. He was afraid that if Shuming did accede to this imploring, it would make him too "accommodating" a person, which Liang Ji certainly did not desire.

Admittedly, from 1912 through 1915, Liang Ji and his son did have "spirited" debates – often shouting matches – over both Western culture influence and Shuming's Buddhist penchant, but Liang Ji never relied on his position as paterfamilias. Moreover, since Liang Ji had always encouraged him to abide by and practice their principles, he could never demand outright that Shuming should agree with him. The two confronted each other as mirror images.

During this time, Liang Ji had already decided on self-administered martyrdom for traditional Chinese cultural values.

By this time, Shuming's personality was set, then, when in 1918 Liang Ji finally committed suicide for Chinese culture, so was the life course and personality of his son set permanently. Liang Ji's suicide was also meant to demonstrate that the true superior person is willing to sacrifice for the public good and for moral principles. He hoped that his act would encourage others to "Do the same as what you say" or in the American colloquial "put your money where your mouth is," to actually act on principles, not just hold them. His entire life was a series of exercises of this, and his suicide in late 1918 was the final crescendo for them. For Shuming himself, Liang Ji's ultimate lesson was unnecessary, as his lifelong obsession for practicing what he preached and personal self-sacrifice for the public good had already hardened. Although his father's martyrdom did influence his own championing of traditional Chinese culture (the initial stages of which were already in evidence in the following year) – Shuming's fundamental character – his lifelong penchant for activism had already been settled long before.

Liang Shuming happened to be an intellectually gifted and spiritually talented person as well, but in judging his life overall, perhaps we should understand it primarily as that of an activist. I would consider his core as this "Confucian" conscience toward society. So, even though his innate intellectual powers made him a great thinker and a great scholar, his core was activism. His later intellectual gravitation toward Wang Yangming and the Taizhou school, his attraction to John Dewey,

and his own lifelong insistence on "Doing the same as I am thinking" stemmed from the activist impulse nurtured in his childhood.

Much like his father, Liang lived his life in shabby gentility. He spent most of his adult career either in temporary housing, rooms in someone else's house, or on the road. His life was austere to the extreme. It was not just that he was a nonsmoking vegetarian tea toddler who usually drank boiled water instead of tea, but, as he once told me, he put little demands on life. One can think of one of his activities engaged in only for pleasure, and that was with drama (Peking opera), which again was something that he inherited from his father. As he told me several times, his only other "hobby" was thinking. I would say that I can think of no historical figure in his lifetime, including famous Buddhist monks like Taixu, that even came close to the level of asceticism of his lifestyle.

A second aspect of Liang's life that is often ignored is that it runs like a thread through most of the major events in twentieth-century Chinese history. Up until 1953, perhaps, Liang's life was where the major action – politically, intellectually, and socially – was occurring. Following Liang's life is like following the twentieth-century Chinese history unfold.

Both aspects are easily demonstrated by a brief review of his life, which I present here.

The first example would be his childhood. His father was a radical reformer, so when Liang started school in 1899, he was following a Western-style curriculum in one of the earliest Western-style schools. The abolition of the old civil service examination system did not take place until several years after Liang started school, so this educational path was in advance of Western-style schools multiplying like "spring bamboo shoots" after rain, as Mao had famously put it.

In 1900, the major historical event of huge proportions and effects was the Boxer Rebellion. The most intense part of this event took place in Beijing. When the Boxer came into the city in numbers, they busied themselves destroying anything foreigner tainted – which alas included Chinese Christians and eventually the diplomatic corps. One of the foreigner-tainted things that they destroyed was Liang's school. In real fear of their lives, the Liang family burned all foreign books, including Shuming's textbooks.

The next important event in Beijing and the first manifestation of mass non-xenophobic modern nationalism was the anti-American Boycott of 1905. Liang was only 11 at the time, but, already influenced by the patriotic activist heritage of his father, he went into the streets searching shops for reprehensible American products and berating shopkeepers. This initial act of activism did not involve, as many of his later acts did, great self-sacrifice or great risk. Aside from the time it took from studying or the risk of being cuffed by a shop owner, it did set the pattern.

The significant intellectual and social development in China during the years 1905–1911 was the spread of Western-style schools and elections for national and provincial assemblies. Once again Liang, in attending the elite Shuntian Middle School, was in the middle of the action. In 1910, he also excitedly attended every session of the newly elected national assembly.

The next important event, obviously, was the 1911 revolution. Following his lifelong path of activism, Liang joined the Tongmenghui and immediately engaged in, as he called it, "bomb and pistol games." This act of activism did involve self-sacrifice and risk, as he was engaged in smuggling weapons and explosives. When the republic was founded on January 1 in Nanjing, Liang immediately went there as a journalist. In this role, he was privy to the insider dealings within both the major and minor political parties. This peek into the seamy side of political life appalled him.

At this point, Liang experienced his existential crisis, attempted suicide twice, and threw himself completely into Buddhism, specifically in Weishi Buddhism. This began in the only period in his life that his active engagement in political and intellectual was absent. How would this period, then, be part of any major historical development of the time? It is precisely at this time that the early twentieth-century Buddhist Revival, based on Weishi Buddhism, becomes an important intellectual current.

Emerging from seclusion, Liang published a remarkable article on his Buddhist studies in *Eastern Miscellany*, which brought him again into contact with the mainstream of historical events, which at that point was the Beijing University President Cai Yuanpei was organizing. Although Liang himself had never even attended university, Cai offered him an appointment to China's first truly modern and great university. Again, because of this article, Liang Qichao, perhaps the single most important intellectual in China at the time (and also, as so many intellectuals of his generation, a Buddhist), sought Liang out. But Liang did not immediately respond to Cai's invitation because he was already in action as personal secretary to the Minister of Justice. Zhang Xun's temporary restoration the Qing monarchy, however, led the government republic to collapse. The first thing Liang did when arriving at Beijing University, however, was to present the faculty not with an academic work but a pamphlet calling upon the intelligentsia to organize for political action to stop civil war and unify China; it will not be the last time he took such action. Interestingly, the pamphlet drew praise from what might be called the two opposite extremes of the Beijing faculty, critic of Chinese culture and advocate of Western ways, Hu Shi, and the most extreme cultural conservative in perhaps all of Chinese history, Gu Hongming. It was not the last time that his actions would elicit approbation from extreme opposites.

At Beijing University Liang again was the epicenter of the next big historical event, the May Fourth Movement, which would eventuate in anti-imperialist mass nationalism, colossal anti-traditionalism, and the Chinese Communist Party. Liang's best friend on the faculty was Li Dazhao, cofounder and greatest early martyr of the Chinese Communist Party. (From what Liang told me, it seems as though he wondered to the end of his life why Li had not invited him to join the CCP.) His time at Beijing University was not, admittedly, replete with his "usual" activism, but it did see his emergence as a nationally known champion of Chinese culture and the beginning of his long-term intellectual antagonism with Chinese Liberalism's great paladin Hu Shi. It also saw the beginning of his friendship with Mao Zedong as well as with other important political figures such as Li Jishen (李济深) and Chen Mingshu 陈铭枢.

In 1924, Liang left academic life forever. As with all events, Liang's decision was "over determined," so that no one single factor was solely responsible for it. His own explanation to me was twofold, both of which echo the themes in the two epigraphs at the beginning of this article. First, although a fervent devotee of Buddhism, he felt that he was not a genuine academic qualified to teach Buddhism at the university level. He advised President Cai Yuanpei to appoint a technically trained Buddhologist Xiong Shili from the China Inner Studies Academy to take over his post. (Xiong may be regarded as the founder of academic New Confucianism through his students Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi and on to Tu Weiming.)

The second factor was that a purely academic life would not have given him full reign to his lifelong activist "compulsion." For example, upon leaving Beijing University, Liang went to Shandong to create a Confucian University (a plan which never came to fruition).

In 1925–1926, the center of historical action shifted to Canton and the Northern Expedition. Liang did not go South at this time. Several of Liang's closest students did, however. In 1927, Liang did go to the Canton area, where he remained until mid-1928. Although he refused several appointments to the Guangdong provincial government, he did, with Provincial chairman Li Jishen's backing, begin rudimentary rural reconstruction work and working out a concrete plan of action. These years saw a search for such a plan to fulfill the realization he had expressed in his first famous book *Eastern and Western Cultures and Their Philosophies* (东西文化及其哲学) in 1921. This arduous 5-year search was not for a new theoretical construct, I most emphasize, but for a plan of action.

In 1929 his search was nearing its end; he joined associates to create the Henan Village Government Academy (河南村治学院), at which Liang taught his proposed distinctive design for rural reconstruction and local self-government. In 1931, he moved to Shandong to found the Zouping Experimental County Government and the Shandong Rural Reconstruction Institute (山东省乡村建设研究院) and realize that design. At the same time he became the chief theoretician and prominent practicer of a nationwide rural reconstruction movement, until the Japanese invasion of Shandong in 1937. There is little doubt that he devoted himself to "action" throughout the decade of 1927–1937; he was continually traveling the country (and to Japan) visiting other rural reconstruction sites. Admittedly, during the same period he also wrote dozens of articles and books; he never abandoned his career as a thinker and his "hobby" of thinking. I would point out, however, that none of his writings were academic in nature; they were all oriented toward concrete action and conveyed solutions to concrete problems.

After the Marco Polo Bridge incident, of course, the major event in Chinese history was the War of Resistance to Japan, and Liang then devoted the years 1937–1946 of action first to saving China from Japan and then saving China from civil war. His first action was to persuade Han Fuqu, the governor of Shandong province, to resist it. Although he immediately left Nanjing assiduously pursuing Han Fuqu, this action resulted in failure, and Han abandoned Shandong to the Japanese, withdrawing with his troops and government. Liang had no choice but to make the best of a bad situation, and so he withdrew with the Zouping Experimental government,

bringing with him a military/political unit that was later to see extensive guerilla action (and its own destruction) against the Japanese.

Liang himself was appointed to the Nationalist Government's wartime consultative body, the National Defense Advisory Council (国防参议会) and the subsequent People's Political Council (国民参政会). For the first months of the war, he dashed between Zouping, Jinan, and Nanjing.

For the rest of 1937, Liang was in continuous motion. As a member of the National Defense Advisory Council, he was commissioned to inspect defenses in Henan and Shaanxi provinces. This trip, however, also brought Liang's activism into the heart of Chinese history. In January of 1938, he went to Yan'an for an inspection visit and extensive private discussions with Mao. Although they apparently had followed each other's career from afar, they had not seen each other for two decades. As I have argued elsewhere, their discussions were an important factor in Mao's subsequent signification of Marxism.

In the months following his visit to Yan'an, Liang rushed around North and Central China. He spent 1 month in Xuzhou consulting with Guangxi clique general (and later president of the Republic of China) Li Zongren while the latter prepared for what much of the world mistakenly believed to be the decisive battle of the war. At the same time, he continued to organize the rural reconstructors into a military for guerilla war and formally founded his own political faction, the Rural Reconstruction Group (乡建派). Li's battle with the Japanese resulted in a spectacular Chinese victory at Taierzhuang, but unfortunately did not prove to be decisive. Liang himself withdrew to Sichuan with the national government and the People's Consultative Conference. As a member of the latter, Liang set to work immediately crafting more plans for action, rural resistance (in combination with rural reform).

His other major plan was for reform of the already-corrupt national conscription measure of the national government. In the process, he founded a formal political organization, the Compulsory Military Service Implementation Association (兵役实施协进会). At the same time, he first presented a systematic "Confucian" democracy, which he described as "neither a multiparty nor a one party system" that would result in a harmonious "e pluribus unum." His major aim in this plan was to promote national unity, a goal that he would tirelessly and aggressively strive for during the following decade.

Discouraged with lack of action on any of his plans submitted to the People's Political Conference, Liang spent most of 1939 traveling behind Japanese lines in the countryside, spending several months traveling in Shandong. Coming close to losing his life several times, Liang witnessed not only the Japanese destroying his rural reconstruction politico-military unit, but more significantly observed the hidden civil war on the ground between the Eighth Route Army and central government authorized troops.

Returning to Sichuan in October, he concluded that unless this crucial political problem of internecine conflict was resolved, the War of Resistance would fail and China would disintegrate. A political solution required political action, and so he immediately proceeded to form the smaller democratic parties into an organization that he hoped would perform as a mediator between the clashing Nationalist and

Communist Parties. The formation of the Association of Comrades for National Unity and Construction (统一建国同志会) in November immediately drew objections from Jiang Kai-shek, and suspicions of the Nationalist Party leadership, but Liang persisted in bringing proposals before the People's Political Conference that would have made the organization responsible for binding mediation between the two major parties, but resulted in no action. By the end of 1940, Liang concluded that only an independent democratic political party could save China.

The major battle between the Communist New Fourth Army and the Nationalist Fortieth division in January of 1941 triggered a public announcement of Liang's intentions, and so the League of Democratic Political Groups (中国民主政团大同盟) was formed. In May, Liang decamped from Chongqing to the foreign sanctuary of Hong Kong to found the organization's official organ, Light (光明报). This newspaper was the immediate predecessor to today's Light Daily (光明日报). Its issues brought the debate between dictatorship and democracy into the open. Liang proceeded to publish until the Japanese occupied Hong Kong at the end of the year. Once again brushing with death, Liang managed to escape to his ancestor home, Guilin, where he was able to devote some time to writing and to wed. This is not to say that he put aside is characteristic activism; a month after his marriage, the Chinese Democratic League (中国民主同盟), successor to the League of Democratic Political Groups, was created.

After the Japanese surrender in August 1945, Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong met in Chongqing and on October 10 signed a peace agreement that called for a coalition government. When the October Double Ten Agreement broke down in November, Liang moved to Chongqing to devote himself to full-time mediation work, which he would continue until the end of 1946. These 2 years saw Liang's dashing between the two major parties, sometimes working closely with the US presidential envoy George Marshall, desperately endeavoring to avoid full-scale civil war. Toward the end of 1946, the Nationalist government convened a national assembly without consultation with the Communist Party and so destroyed any hope of further successful mediation. Liang, heartbroken and frustrated, resigned his post as secretary-general of the Democratic League and returned to Beipei (北培), Sichuan, to his school, the Mianren Academy (勉仁文学院). A month later, Marshall, also heartbroken and frustrated, returned to the USA

This 1947–1949 period was a short respite from activism, and so Liang wrote and published his penultimate book, *The Essentials of Chinese Culture* (中国文化要义). On the other hand he did devoted himself to actual carrying out of his educational ideals. Mao, however, would not let him remain out of the mainstream of history and forced him to return to Beijing in hopes of bringing him into the newly founded government. Much to Mao's annoyance, Liang refused to join the government.

Liang was back in the center of things from 1950 to September 1953. He and Mao continued their discussions begun in Yan'an, but this time in Mao's quarters in the Zhongnanhai. In 1950 and 1951, Liang continued his activism, but in a manner

prescribed by Mao, who sent him to various places in China to inspect land reform. This indeed placed Liang back into the center of action, but almost immediately his lifelong inclination of emphasizing practice over theory and his fixation on "conformity of profession and practice" (表里如一) brought him into skirmishes with authorities. He was openly critical of land reform in Sichuan under Deng Xiaoping; this was portentous of Liang's later open criticism of the first Five Year Plan and his climactic conflict with Mao.

Viewing his life in this way, it is easy to understand that, upon once again emerging in the public eye in 1987, despite having just published his final book, *The Human Mind/Heart and Human Life* (人心与人生), and at a conference on his academic thought, he proclaimed with such vehemence that "I am someone who goes all out to do. I've been going for all that I am worth my whole life."

Alone among the twentieth-century New Confucians, Liang seems to have seamlessly joined his thought and his life, his theory with his practice. This one integrating aspect runs through his life from childhood to old age. It is based upon a decidedly "Confucian" conscience and conscientiousness in performing the role of the Confucian intellectual as moral leader and example. Although many of his activities might indeed be viewed as based on some "Confucianism" or on the modern concept of good citizenship, I do not see it that way. His many activities as a political and social activist from age 12 onward, it seems to me, was based on his consciousness of being part of that peculiarly Chinese "moral aristocracy," the morally superior person's (君子) duty toward society and ultimately the world. Liang has been described as one kind of "ist" or another. I proclaimed him to be Confucianist, and, as mentioned above, recently he has been proclaimed as ultimately a Buddhist. Although he accepted the title of Confucian and maintained his private commitment to Buddhism, he also considered himself to be a Marxist, had great appreciation for Daoism, and deeply respected Christianity. That is, he was not an exclusivist "ist" of any sort, neither Confucian nor Buddhist. Nevertheless, if the core of his character and life was activism, it must be said that this activism was based on principles that were obviously more Confucian than Buddhist. I also dare predict that by his 220th anniversary in 2113, his historical image will be that of an activist, a Chinese Gandhi, and not that of an academic philosopher or a mere "thinker."

Chapter 8
Confucianism as the Religion for Our Present Time: The Religious Dimension of Confucianism in Liang Shuming's Thought

Thierry Meynard

I would like to start with a projection in the future. In 2050, China may be the first superpower in the world. Then, tens of millions of ethnic Chinese would be living abroad, just as millions of nonethnic Chinese would be living in China. Chinese language would have become an international language, and Chinese culture, including Confucianism, would be widely spread, studied, and practiced.

Such a scenario is not unlikely. Yet, the shapes and contours that this worldwide Confucianism would take are quite vague. If we want to reflect on its conditions of possibility and on its content, then we may turn to Liang Shuming for some ideas, because he was the first ever, some 90 years ago, to articulate the idea that Confucianism was the form of culture the most needed in the present age, not only for China but also for the world culture. One of Liang's most important ideas was that Confucianism could replace the traditional role of religions and provide humanity with moral and spiritual resources. I have analyzed Liang's ideas on religion in a book published not long ago (Meynard 2011). Here, I would like to focus on some elements of his analysis, which may be more pertinent for our conference. I shall propose further an evaluation of Liang's ideas in discussion with contemporary Neo-Confucianism, as well as with recent social and cultural trends, in China and elsewhere.

T. Meynard (✉)
Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China
e-mail: meiqianl@mail.sysu.edu.cn

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd
and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*,
China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_8

8.1 Confucianism in a Pluralistic Setting

8.1.1 Liang's Three Cultural Orientations

A key element in Liang's thought is its pluralistic account of cultural orientations, centered on the notion of inexhaustible "will (*yiyu* 意欲)."[1] Accordingly, the will is carried onward by a constant conflict between satisfactions and dissatisfactions, and thus it makes three basic choices. The first choice, taken by the West, was to embrace the struggle, always projecting itself ahead to change and improve the external conditions of life and society. The self fights in order to overcome material obstacles, and more importantly, intellectual obstacles, and thus engages itself in a struggle of ideas and opinions. In the second option, which had been taken by China, the will decides to adapt itself to previous external conditions, turning inward and transforming itself. Finally, the third choice corresponds to the Indian position in which the "actual will" negates the "previous self" in a radical way, since it withdraws from the fight altogether, choosing not to constitute a new "actual will."[2]

For Liang, while in the past, the three cultures of the West, India, and China have taken their own independent paths, they have come into closer contact in modern times. Because of the influence of economics and politics, cultures come into conflict with one another. Western culture invades and attacks cultures which have taken the second and third paths. However, Western culture faces the question of "alienation" (*yihua* 异化), which is created by an excessive concern with forward and external projection and by its desire for conquest and competition. Always projecting itself ahead, Western culture cannot solve its problems by itself. Therefore, Liang predicts that in the near future, Western culture shall reorient itself along the line of Chinese culture. The West may not need to completely abandon the fundamental products of modernity, such as science, democracy, and so on, but it will abandon its onward thrust toward progress and adopt a more conciliatory approach to life. Then, China will become the model for world culture. However, at present China needs to successfully, and sufficiently, appropriate and integrate elements of the first path in order to fully develop its traditional, harmonious spirit. In a more remote future, however, humanity would shift to the third path. After having successfully resolved the questions of interpersonal relationships and personal cultivation thanks to Confucianism, humanity could then face the radical question of the meaning of life. Then, for the Indian, Buddhist path would impose itself on the whole of humanity.

---

[1] *Eastern and Western Cultures and Their Philosophies*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 1, 352. Schopenhauer's idea of the will was introduced into China by Wang Guowei 王国维 in *Human Words and Language* (*Renjian cihua* 人间词话, 1910). While Wang Guowei translated it from English as *yizhi* 意志, Liang Shuming adopted *yiyu*.

[2] What is negated here is not life itself, but the "continuum of life" made of temporary moments. The mind discovers then that the true life is not made of this succession of temporary and unstable stages, but rather a tranquil and permanent reality, accessible to the one who discards the wrong idea of a permanent and independent self.

8.1.2 Discussion on Pluralism

As we can see, Liang promoted Confucianism as essential, but not absolute. We should remember that he was opposed to all ideologies, because, according to him, one day or another, ideologies are found to be deceitful and are swept away, creating more anxiety for the people who once believed in them.[3] Being opposed to all the isms, Liang would probably not like the word Confucianism, a word which in fact does not exist as such in the Chinese language. Liang did not consider Confucianism as absolute, because he never considered it in isolation from other cultures and religions. His articulation of Confucianism with two other great cultural and religious traditions is remarkable. He envisioned a society in which the three cultures of the West, China, and India could coexist.

In this regard, his thought goes against the current trend of contemporary Neo-Confucianism *in building an encompassing system*, which could embrace all the aspects of life and society and could solve all questions. Such a trend was already obvious in the thought of Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 (1905–1995) and he has been followed in this by his disciples. More recently, others, like Jiang Qing 蒋庆 (b. 1953) or Kang Xiaoguang 康晓光 (b. 1963), attempt to build a Political Confucianism which expressly rejects the pluralism of modern societies.[4] With the exception of a few, like Lin Anwu 林安梧 (b. 1957) in Taiwan, most Neo-Confucians aim at reconstituting a monolithic system of thought based on a model of China which has never existed. They are the inheritors of the Confucian discourse of the elites, a discourse exclusive of all other traditions and religions. Their construction of Confucianism as identical to Chinese culture is in fact the nostalgic idealization of a past which has never existed, rejecting in the margins all the other cultures (Daoism, Buddhism, Muslim, Christian, and the traditions of all the other ethnic minorities). Also, they fail in distinguishing their own personal commitment to Confucian values and the promotion of the same values as the unique and exclusive choice for all and for the

[3] *Treatise on Finding the Foundation and Resolving the Doubt* (*Jiuyuan jueyilun* 究元决疑论, 1916), in *Complete Works*, Vol. 1, p. 18

[4] Jiang Qing (蒋庆), a former researcher at Shenzhen Administrative College 深圳行政学院, has opened his own Confucian Academy, *Yangmingjingshi* 阳明精舍, near Guiyang 贵阳. He advocates replacing Marxism with Confucianism as the ruling ideology, making it a *national doctrine* 国教. Yet he sees Confucianism as above the state, since it exercises the function of criticizing the moral failures of the state. Confucianism should be based on the *Gongyang* learning (公羊学) and become political, seeking to uphold social justice through institutional reforms. Jiang openly dismisses pluralism of values as leading to secularization and relativization. To remedy the flaws of the social contract in Western democratic systems, Confucianism should be established as a quasi-religion expressing the relationship between people and heaven. Recitation of canonical texts should be incorporated at all levels of education; academies and Confucian temples should be opened all across the country; Confucian newspapers, radio, and TV should be established; etc. See Makeham, *Lost Soul*, 261–276. As extreme and simplistic these ideas are, they have received some attention outside the academic world and have fostered some practical realizations in the education and the business world. Concerning Kang Xiaoguang, see David Ownby (2009).

whole society. Their project is basically marked by a spirit of "restauration" (复古), attempting to erase the demise of Confucianism in the twentieth century.

Some may excuse such a conservative discourse, by taking into consideration the fact that China would need first to assert its cultural root before it can engage itself into a dialogue with other cultures and traditions. Others may argue that the limitation of time and energy presses toward the most important. Yet, these considerations are misguided because they overlook the basic mindset of contemporary China in which pluralism has become an essential element. In this sense, Confucianism has truly to pass the test of modernity, that is, of pluralism.

I would suggest here a parallel with the Catholic Church. Even though some thinkers since the Middle Ages had tried to distinguish theology from other realms of human knowledge, the official discourse of the Church was often encompassing all the areas of knowledge. Only with the Council Vatican II, the Catholic Church has recognized the autonomy of reason in the domain of natural and human sciences, as well as the plurality of values and beliefs. In the same way, and following the steps of Liang Shuming, Confucianism needs to renounce presenting itself as an encompassing system, as if the way of the ancient sages could solve all the problems of modern society. Same as post-Christian Western societies cannot and do not wish to rebuild a Christian society, post-Confucian China cannot live on the myth of a Confucian China. Further, Confucianism needs to engage itself more deeply in dialogue with other cultural and religious systems. There is an urgent need to situate the Chinese quest for its cultural identity within the broader context of similar efforts elsewhere in the world. I think it is more fruitful to think the future of Confucianism as embedded in the frame of a truly pluralistic society. This is the first lesson that we may gather from Liang Shuming.

8.2 Confucianism as a Substitute to Conventional Religion

8.2.1 Like a Religion and Not a Religion

For Liang, Confucius gave Chinese culture an orientation completely different to that of all other civilizations in regard to religion. In *Substance of Chinese Culture* (*Zhongguo wenhua yaoyi* 中国文化要义), he stated that, for Confucius, the root problem of religion was not its irrationality, but its immorality. The worship of deities destroyed Confucian benevolence (*ren* 仁) because people craved for external things and thus wrongly believed in the existence of deities who could fulfill their requests. People first deviated from correct moral attitudes and then developed wrong ideas, rather than the reverse. According to Liang, after the Duke of Zhou and Confucius, the center of Chinese culture shifted to nonreligious education. The previous worship of heaven and ancestors, as well as other forms of religion, became only one aspect of education. In the new setting, attention shifted to the family, rather than the temple. Liang therefore contrasted the community-centered life of

Christianity in the West with the family-centered life of China. This created two different cultures—one of religion and one of nonreligion. While religion calls for all believers to observe certain religious tenets, Confucianism emphasizes self-examination and does not set a universal standard, with the conviction that everyone has moral reason, a "sense of what is right and wrong" (*shifei zhixin* 是非之心).[5] The problem is precisely here. This sense has varied enormously, especially in monotheistic religions and their societies. And so, Liang came to say that the Confucian path makes traditional religions obsolete, or as he stated that "morality replaces religion" (*yi daode dai zongjiao* 以道德代宗教).[6]

However, Liang held that Confucianism, though not a religion, is like a religion.[7] By returning to moral reason, people experience a fundamental unity with the moral life of the cosmos and obtain consolation and peace from this. In this way, Confucian morality performs the psychological function of providing consolation, which Liang had assigned to religion. Here, Liang drew mostly from the Song and Ming Neo-Confucians for whom the personal inner heart is enlarged to the dimensions of the moral cosmos, enabling humans to achieve real freedom within the world. Through moral reasoning, individuals apprehend the movements of the cosmic life and embrace its flux. By balancing their inner moral feelings with reason, they are associated with the pace of the cosmos.

Liang expressed Confucian ethics by using the Buddhist concept of cutting attachments. Accordingly, Confucianism can overcome the discriminating mind's attachment to the mistaken ideas of the self and the world, and thereby people can find spiritual harmony in the world and ultimately reach the essence of the cosmic life in its state of flux.[8] Yet, because Confucianism wants us to be actively engaged into our concrete world, we should not cut the inborn attachments to life, to the world, or to the self, that is, we should not cut the objective conditions in which our own existence is founded. This is reserved to the Buddhist stage, when people will discard their own existence and thereby reach the essence of the cosmic life in its state of tranquility and unconditionality, neither arising nor ceasing.

Therefore, Liang envisioned the modern age not as shaped by religion (neither the religion of the West nor the religion of India), but as being shaped by morality. For him, humanity was entering into the ethical age. But, Confucian ethics does not consist of performing good actions or of getting nice feelings about doing so, but it introduces us to what we may call a spiritual experience. Liang perceived Confucianism as a form of secular morality, but deeply spiritual.[9]

---

[5] *Substance of Chinese Culture*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 3, 108

[6] *Substance of Chinese Culture*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 3, 95

[7] *Eastern and Western Cultures and Their Philosophies*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 1, 417

[8] *Human Mind and Human Life*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 3, 660

[9] Like many intellectuals at this time, Liang considered the terms "religion" and "morality" to be mutually exclusive, and he was himself quite opposed to conventional religions. Even though he clearly understood the positive role of Christianity in the historical genesis of Western societies and in promoting good morals, yet, he wanted people to focus on their true interiority, instead of

8.2.2 Discussion on Secularization

Therefore, for Liang, Confucianism provides the modern age with an alternative to conventional religion, by developing self-reflection, introspection, and the inner life. With the individual always in danger of being swallowed by the artificiality and superficiality of modern society, in Confucianism one can find a moral quest and an ethical practice. By fulfilling our moral duties toward one another, one penetrates further into the true meaning of life. Not only does individual thus uplift his moral lives, he also enters into an aesthetic and spiritual experience.

After Liang Shuming, many Chinese scholars were able to go beyond the narrow concept of religion that the New Culture Movement held. They were able to rediscover the true religious bearings of Confucianism. Liang's ideas concerning religion have greatly influenced contemporary New Confucian philosophers, helping them to reclaim Confucianism's spiritual tradition (Bresciani 2001). In the past 50 years, philosophers belonging to this movement have reassessed the question of religion with greater openness. Liang's analysis of Chinese culture as being without religion, and where moral reason replaced both faith in God and obedience to a Church, has been largely accepted by contemporary New Confucians. Was accepted also Liang's view that Confucianism was not a religion in the conventional sense and yet that it was deeply spiritual. Liang's influence can be felt in the "Declaration on Behalf of Chinese Culture Respectfully Announced to the People of the World," written by Zhang Junmai 张君劢 (1886–1969), Tang Junyi 唐君毅 (1909–1978), Xu Fuguan 徐复观 (1903–1982), and Mou Zongsan and proclaimed on January 1, 1958. The four authors emphasized that Confucianism was not a purely intellectual theory, but a life commitment which held that the supreme ideal of sage-hood was to be in communion with Heaven. Though Confucianism did not develop into an organized religion, it still contained a deep religiosity. The four authors were able to go beyond the artificial dichotomy established by Liang between religion and morality, stating that, for Confucianism, "human existence is simultaneously moral and religious."[10] The authors did not shy away from using the term "religion" and qualified Confucianism as a "humanist religion" (*renwen zongjiao* 人文宗教) or an "ethical religion" (*daode de zongjiao* 道德的宗教) (Tu and Tucker 2003). More recently, Tu Weiming 杜维明 (b. 1940) has developed the concept of "Confucian spirituality" as an encompassing way of life. Some scholars have also attempted to go beyond the misrepresentation of Chinese culture as one of immanence and as opposed to a Western culture of transcendence. Yu Yingshi 余英时 (b. 1930) and Tang Yijie 汤一介 (b. 1927) have developed the idea of an "immanent transcendence" (*neizai chaoyue* 内在超越) in Chinese culture or Confucianism.[11]

---

relying on religious beliefs. Probably Liang's thought was a bit constrained in this dichotomy between religion and morality, which was so influential then.

[10] *Manifesto*, quoted by Bresciani, *Reinventing Confucianism*, 54

[11] Yu Yingshi 余英时(1984) and Tang Yijie 汤一介 (1991)

In this beginning of the twenty-first century, humanity is confronted to religious extremism, endangering peace in many parts of the world. As Liang Shuming shows, Confucianism can be an ethical resource for the whole humanity because of its strong universalism, going beyond the barriers that religion often raise between people. In the context of a worldwide culture torn down by religious conflicts, Confucianism can provide a secular foundation to society and to the world, since it calls each individual to make the self-conscious experience of a moral and spiritual transformation by which particular attachments to ideologies, religions, and cultures are discarded, in order to create a unity assumed as an individual and collective responsibility. The idea of a social bound not grounded on religion, or on God, but grounded on the awareness that people are the masters of their own destiny has been described by the French historian and philosopher Marcel Gauchet (b. 1946), in the context of Western societies, as the "coming out of religion (Gallimard 1985)." Gauchet reads in Christianity a principle which was leading to the "coming out of religion," but which happened only in modern times. In China, according to Liang, the passage from the religious sphere to secular morality and politics would have happened at the time of Confucius, and this would mean that China had accomplished secularization 2,000 years before the West. In this account, Christianity is not the unique case of a "religion that brings about the exit from religion."

But the crux of the matter may not be the unanswerable question of whether China or the West first came out of religion. What is far more important is the kind of secularization we are talking about. Here, Liang reminds us that secularization cannot be based only on a set of values, principles, and institutions, but should imply above all the moral and spiritual transformation of the individuals in an ethical community. It is only at this deep level of humanity that the individuals find their spiritual needs being addressed. And it is precisely here that Western secularization departs from the Confucian one, since the former considers individuals as prior to society, with individual needs radically distinguished from collective needs. In other words, the Confucian secularization challenges the Western categories in which its own secularization is founded, like the dichotomy between individuals and state or the distinction between the religious and the secular. Liang's use of the term of religion is therefore complex, since he applies in negative the Western category of religion to Confucianism, being defined as the disappearance of religion, or the "coming out of religion" in Gauchet's words and, at the same time, fulfilling religious needs.

Therefore, Liang suggests that we should move beyond the modern split between the religion and the secular and understand Confucianism as precisely an inner principle which should be present in all particular traditions, that is, the articulation of particular beliefs to our common human nature. This articulation should not be done by eradicating all religious and cultural differences. As we all know, when differences are not allowed to be expressed in the public space, it is often for the profit of a certain class representing the dominant order, and then, the exclusion of differences provokes frustration, violence, and radicalism. Therefore, what is needed is for each particular tradition and culture to appropriate something from Confucian ethic and spirituality, expressing its passage from particular beliefs to our common

nature through introspection and ethics. Understood this way, Confucianism may need not to be against religions, but can be their ally.

8.3 The Spirit of Confucian Rituals

8.3.1 Rituals Without Rituals

We have shown above that Liang called people to turn to their inner self. But, this turn to the self was concretely made through rituals. Liang showed how Confucius gave to rituals a new meaning. In the traditional rites, the worshipper and the object of worship stand in clear and distant opposition. On the contrary, Confucian rituals allow this gap to be bridged and for the worshipper to be introduced to the fundamental harmony in oneself and in the cosmos. In Confucian rituals, human beings fully participate in the cosmic life, becoming united with heaven and earth. Some solemn rituals at temples can realize this, but for Liang, the whole of human life is to be ritualized, becoming a great liturgy. This includes one's familial relations with one's parents and siblings and at school between teachers and students. Most importantly, rites do not express division, but rather a harmony which embraces the self and the cosmos, so that we have "rituals without rituals" (*wuli zhi li* 无礼之礼) and "music without sound" (*wusheng zhi yue* 无声之乐).[12]

Liang's explanation of the Confucian rites is deeply influenced by the cosmological language of Neo-Confucianism, and yet it perfectly reflects Confucius' understanding of rituals, not as religious sacrifices paid to some deities or to some supernatural forces, but as the moral and aesthetical expression of a fundamental harmony among human beings and beyond.[13] This was also the meaning expressed by Xunzi, when he stated that the common people are mistaken when they think that rituals are addressed to deities. But the *junzi* 君子 understands that rituals are like ornaments (*wen* 文)—that is, the refined expressions of an inner attitude of respect.[14] Therefore, the rites do not stress the objective presence of a divinity, but the state of mind of the worshiper.[15]

For Liang, rituals are operative because they change the usual way of thinking and behaving of the people. According to him, the fundamental basis of Western culture is the calculating mind, or *biliang* 比量. This contributes to the strengthening

[12] *Substance of Chinese Culture*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 3, 131

[13] See Anne Cheng (1997). As he acknowledged, Liang got some inspiration from an article of Feng Youlan, "The Confucian theory on the rituals of wedding, funerals and sacrifices" (*Rujia duiyu hunsangjili zhi lilun* 儒家对于婚丧祭礼之理论), published in 1928; see *Substance of Chinese Culture*, in Complete Works, Vol. 3.

[14] *Substance of Chinese Culture*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 3, 113; Xunzi, "Tianlunpian 天论篇 [Chapter on Heaven]": "故君子以为文,而百姓以为神"

[15] *Substance of Chinese Culture*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 3, 113; Xunzi, "Lilunpian 礼论篇 [Chapter on Rite]": "祭者,志意思慕之情也"

of the hindrance created by the discriminating mind. Liang develops the idea that the Confucian intuition, or moral reason, can effectively neutralize this first hindrance and cut the attachment due to discriminations.[16] As such, the discriminating mind still operates in the world; it perceives human reality as still being structured according to differences, establishing legitimate distinctions between the noble man and the petty man or between the five basic ethical relationships (father-son, ruler-minister, and so on). However, the mind recognizes these distinctions for what they are and refrain from creating rigid divisions, or as Liang said, "the mind can become an entity that is one with everything, allowing the cosmos to communicate without separation, despite its vastness."[17] This idea finds its roots in the thought of Confucius, about whom it is reported: "there were four things from which the Master was entirely free: he had no foregone conclusions, no arbitrary predeterminations, no obstinacy, and no egoism."[18] Precisely because Confucius realized the ontological unity between the human mind and the cosmos, he could overcome the mundane distinctions arising from self-centeredness and egoism.

8.3.2 Discussion About Rituals

We have to acknowledge the fact that Confucian rituals as such have almost completely disappear from contemporary China. There are a few attempts to restore Confucian rituals. In a recent article, Sébastien Billioud and Joël Thoraval have published their analysis of a field research on the "teaching of the rites" (*lijiao* 礼教), especially in honor of Confucius (Billioud and Thoraval 2009). They describe in fact a great diversity of rituals being performed at Qufu on the occasion of Confucius's birthday. There was the great liturgy organized by the local government in the Temple of Confucius, but it remained devoid of true Confucian spirit of introspection, with college students mechanically shouting verses from the *Analects*, or PLA soldiers making the rituals like a military parade. There was also a show in the stadium with rock singers lightly dressed! More in line with the true spirit of Confucius, there were people coming from all over China and associated thanks to Internet, having studied for some time the Confucian rituals and having practiced them daily at home. These believers, dressed in Ming dynasty garbs, gathered at Zoucheng 邹城 to honor Confucius and Mencius, and they performed rituals with a great reverence but without rigidity. We may suppose that when these people return back home,

[16] In fact, we can easily trace Liang's idea back to Zhang Taiyan. In his first essay, "Treatise on Finding the Foundation and Resolving the Doubt," Liang quoted from Zhang Taiyan's *Establishing a Religion*, which stated that the mind should overcome "existence and nothingness, self and other, subject and object, essence and function, one and two, presence and absence, birth and death, discontinuity and continuity, coming and leaving, cause and effect, and all other illusory differences." *Treatise on Finding the Foundation and Resolving the Doubt*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 1, 9

[17] *Treatise on Differences and Similarities*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 7, 159

[18] Confucius, *Analects*, 9.4

they will continue to practice the Confucian rituals for themselves and that they will find ways to associate with others to perform rites in appropriate places.

I think that Confucian rituals can be meaningful for many people, since our modern societies often lack symbols. When one lives in the big cities of China, he may feel a great void of symbols expressing moral values. All he may see are high-rise buildings, offices, and shopping malls. Living in this kind of environment, he may wish to have more spatial and temporal signifiers of his quest for meaning. In China today, there are not many markers of this, compared to India, Europe, or America. Not only there is the need for more Buddhist temples, churches, and mosques but also for restoring some of the Confucius temples or academies. As an example, a big city such as Guangzhou where I live has no Temple of Confucius.

However, one should not be too much concerned about the disappearance of rituals of the past. What is far more important is precisely the spirit of the rituals or, as Liang was stressing, the spirit of Confucian rituals, "rituals without rituals." In this sense, the true spirit of Confucianism is first found in the moral consciousness of each individual and in its expression through a common ethos in society. Liang reminds us that the rituals as such are not as important as the spirit in which they are lived. When people authentically live out the Confucian values, then, some modernized forms of traditional rituals will surely emerge.

8.4 Confucian Practice in Individual Life

8.4.1 Liang as Listener of His Inner Self

For Liang, the act of thinking was never disconnected from one's life in the world. What is remarkable in Liang is his capacity to articulate deep introspection and action. His engagement in the world was not dictated by external ideologies, but spurred from his inner life. I would like here to give a few examples of this. In his early twenties, Liang was hesitating between becoming a monk and staying in the world. As he recalled,

> in the spring of 1920, having accepted an invitation from the magazine Young China to give a talk on the issue of religion, I was at home completing my speech. It should have been quite easy, but unexpectedly I had difficulties taking to my pen, and only wrote a few lines with plenty of corrections. My ideas were unclear and my mind confused… I rested my mind for a while, and then I took a book that was at hand, the *Records of Ming Scholars* (*Mingru xue'an* 明儒学案), reading some parts here and there. In the book, I was quite familiar with the Taizhou school of Wang Gen 王艮. This time I suddenly saw in the *Recorded words of Dongya* the eight characters 'one hundred worries enmesh and snare; my vital spirit finds no peace' (*bailüwengu xueqimoning* 百虑交锢, 血气靡宁) . Were these words not addressed to me? Did they not point out my present situation? Immediately, my hairs stood up and I was sweating. I reflected silently. Slowly I came to a decision to drop my plans to become a monk. In the summer of that year, I was invited to Ji'nan to give *Eastern and Western Cultures and their Philosophies*. When I came back to Beijing, I edited and published the book. By the end of November I was married.[19]

[19] *Short Story of My Self-Learning*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 2, 699

Liang picked up the book by Huang Zongxi 黄宗羲 and then had a kind of revelation. He truly believed that the meaning of this passage was addressed to him, just as Saint Augustine heard a voice asking him to "take up and read" (*tolle, lege*) a random passage in the Bible. In Confucianism, Liang found a way to solve his anxiety and to find peace in this world. The illumination was so powerful that he was compelled to change his lifestyle and thus abandon his plans to become a Buddhist monk.

Despite his strong resolve to engage actively within the world, Liang always experienced a tension with his desire to leave it. For example, in June 1949, while residing in Sichuan, he had just finished the first draft of *Substance of Chinese Culture* and went to look for the living Buddha Gonggar 贡噶呼图克图 (1893–1957), who accepted him as disciple. Liang received from Gonggar the Abhişeka, or sprinkling of water on the head (Guanding 灌顶). In this occasion, Liang wrote: "Immediately, I realized the truth as never before."[20] On August 4, Liang started a retreat of 40 days, with a few friends, at a Buddhist holy site, the Jinyun Mountain 缙云山, near Chongqing. Liang made a few attempts of entering into the Mahāmudrā, or the Great Seal (*dashouyin* 大手印), by visualizing the *mandala* of Vajravarahi (*jin'ganghaimu* 金刚亥母), but in his diary he expressed repeated failures. On August 17, he came to a realization about the origin of his difficulty:

> While I was reading aloud in the preparatory exercises that 'the great compassion in the present life leads to reincarnation,' I suddenly realized that Tantric Buddhism is about becoming a Buddha in this life. Although I myself believe [in becoming a Buddha], yet I do not have the desire to become a Buddha during this lifetime. I practice only for harmonizing, nourishing, and clarifying the mind. Even though becoming a Buddha and clarifying the mind are connected, since I did not make the resolution of becoming a Buddha, my [Tantric] practice cannot easily gain strength.[21]

Liang saw here a contradiction between his ideal of being a bodhisattva in this world and what he perceived as the focus of Tantric Buddhism, leaving the world and becoming a Buddha. Liang was practicing Tantric meditation as a therapy to pacify his mind, but he did not want to run the full course of the process and leave the world, since he was committed to help all living beings in this world. Two days later, Liang mentioned his responsibility for "establishing the nation" and for "changing world culture." On September 2 and 3, he recorded in his diary the bombing of Chongqing by the Communists and the heavy casualties resulting from it. Some 10 days later, he went down from the mountain and returned to a world that he had never completely left.

Because Liang paid so much attention to his inner self, his action needed to conform to it and he always refused to betray his consciousness. Liang's uprightness and courage have been praised by many. During the Mao era, Liang was one of the very few intellectuals to express his own convictions without bowing to the official ideology, for example, during "Criticizing Lin Biao and Confucius" (*pilin pikong* 批

[20] This episode itself is not mentioned in the diary, but narrated by Liang in a letter, written much later, in 1984. *Letters*, Vol. 8, in *Complete Works*, 307–308

[21] *Diary*, Vol. 8, in *Complete Works*, 423–424

林批孔) campaign (1973–1974), in which Liang refused to criticize Confucius and even said "You can carry off the commander of the armed forces of a large state, but you cannot change the will of the humblest person" (*Sanjun keyi duo shuai, pifu buke duo zhi* 三军可以夺帅,匹夫不可夺志).[22] Liang's courageous attitude has been interpreted by many as an expression of freedom of thought.

8.4.2 Discussion About Spiritual Freedom

It seems to me that Liang's individual practice is particularly relevant in our modern or postmodern context. Three decades ago, Michel Foucault (1926–1984) showed us the postmodern crisis at the level of the self. His project was precisely to reimagine new modes of subjectivism, new modes by which the subject could understand and shape his own identity. For this, Foucault drew a lot from the study of Greco-Roman Antiquity and especially of the Roman Empire. At a time where freedom in the public forum was narrowing, people were looking for new forms of individual practices, dealing with diet, sexuality, and ethical relationships. By developing these techniques of the self, they were able to reclaim for themselves a certain degree of personal freedom.

In a very different context, Liang attempted something quite similar in the second part of this life. Although he was denied political action in the fields of education and social work, he developed for himself an array of practices which keep him spiritually alive. And although much is to be learned in the collective practices that he attempted before 1949, his individual practice may prove to be even more relevant. He understood that a direct resistance and opposition to the regime were not the real issue, but he went on developing different techniques of the self (meditation, physical exercises, diet, etc.), drawn mostly from Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism. This is perhaps Liang's deepest secret. His freedom of thought would have been impossible without the spiritual freedom which was nourished by those techniques.

In this respect, Liang may not appear so unique and so out of reach, since we can suppose that even under the Maoist government, many people could privately engage in similar practices. The question of spiritual freedom should be addressed at anytime and not reserved only for the times of dictatorship. Although many people in the West enjoy today the benefits of political participation, yet the high degree of sophistication of our societies deprive the individual of his/her true identity and call for new techniques in nurturing the true self and regaining inner freedom. There is a need for the individual to develop a Confucian spirituality, in the sense that it is engaged into the world, but it is not too worldly. I see therefore Confucianism as a spirituality of resistance, by which one may refuse the aspects of our modern societies which make him go astray from his true human nature. Here also Confucius and Liang Shuming can be masters for us.

[22] Confucius, *Analects*, 9.26

8.5 Confucian Practice in Communities

8.5.1 Liang's Engagement in Rural Communities

Liang advocated autonomous villages and communities that would be their own agents of development. The focus was therefore not on bureaucracy or administration. Nor did Liang see the rural reconstruction as a political movement akin to the political tutelage and the constitutional government promoted by Sun Yat-sen. Liang envisioned a contract of mutual assistance between peasants, rooted in the historical "village compact" (*xiangyue* 乡约) of the Song dynasty. This Confucian form of community life was to be a new creation, integrating responses to the challenge of modernity. The scope of the new compact was not limited to matters of rural development or self-defense against banditry, but was extended to all aspects of rural life. The educational program was not centered on abstract social goals, but on people. Liang envisioned the complete transformation of the individual in areas such as intellect, knowledge, technical ability, culture, and ethics. Teaching would not be limited to schools, and academic results would not be the primary objective. The project aimed at a general transformation of the entire rural culture and society. The whole village would constitute the "school," and all the villagers would be "students." In order to develop strong bonds between teachers and students, meals would be taken together. In addition, every year teachers would go to different villages and view the work of former students, advising them on any difficulties they were encountering. Students were encouraged to frequently engage in self-reflection, for example, by writing in their diaries in order to clarify their emotions and order their ideas.[23] Students were to be self-disciplined, instead of being coerced and disciplined by others.[24] The rural reconstruction program also advocated changes to customs and habits. People were encouraged to give up smoking drugs and gambling with money. The practice of foot-binding was discouraged, as were arranged marriages at an early age.[25] Instead of relying on the police, educational programs were offered to the peasants so they could change these undesirable customs by themselves.

We have discussed above how Liang understood the spirit of the rituals. We can clearly see how Liang practiced these rituals in his own life. In Caozhou 曹州, Liang would give informal speeches under a tree, always linking his talks to personal experiences. He once told about how the previous day he had met an old man and a 3-year-old child who were begging. While relating this experience, and reflecting on the social gap which existed between destitute people and himself, Liang started to cry in front of his pupils.[26] Each day at dawn, Liang would also give a speech to his students.[27] Sunrise was very important to Liang, since at that time it was possible to

[23] See *Morning Talks*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 2, 51

[24] Ma Yong, *Liang Shuming, an Extraordinary Thinker*, 119

[25] Ma Yong, *Liang Shuming, an Extraordinary Thinker,* 127–128

[26] Wang Ling, *Liang Shuming*, 8

[27] *Morning Talks*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 2, 36–140

experience a communion with nature and with the cosmos and to reflect more deeply on oneself.[28] Liang also insisted on the moral dimension of this experience, stating that "while everybody is still asleep, I alone am awake—I feel a great responsibility."[29] Liang would observe a long period of silence, then talk about moral progress, and reflect on the meaning of life. Sometimes, he would answer questions from the students. Liang saw this moment as a spiritual preparation for the day to come. During these times, he would admit to his mistakes and repent (*chanhui* 忏悔). He would contemplate how much of human life is pitiable and the extent to which human beings were controlled by their passions and were unable to be their own masters. Then, Liang would renew his trust in the energy within him and in the cosmos. He would feel self-renewed (*zixin* 自新) and find direction for the day ahead.[30]

The instructions Liang gave to his students were grounded in a spiritual communion between himself and the moral forces of the universe. Through these daily rituals, he and his disciples could obtain clarity (*qingming* 清明), overcome their selfishness, become settled and at peace (*anhe* 安和), and finally reestablish spiritual communion between themselves and the universe.[31] From there, they could effectively engage themselves in creating new social forms which would re-create the original form of communication that had been lost.

Despite the sincerity of Liang in his efforts toward rural reconstruction, he met many difficulties. He did not succeed in energizing the peasants because he could not fully understand their wants and needs. He himself admitted that the peasants were somewhat apathetic toward his rural reconstruction program. Liang had probably demanded too much from them, and the road to revolution may have seemed much easier than patient social transformation through spiritual and moral self-cultivation.

8.5.2 Discussion on the Role of Communities

While Liang started to implement this model of new communities in rural China, at around the same moment, Martin Buber in Israel was envisioning new types of kibbutz.[32] Also at the same time, Gandhi founded ashrams in India. All these experiments were inspired by socialist political projects, strong ethical values, and a religious fervor. However, whether in China, India or Israel, these attempts combining religion, culture, and nationality have almost all died out. For sure, in these three cases, community was based on rural economy and lifestyle, while urbanization has been the mainstream all over the world.

With the development of urbanization and capitalism, societies have changed a lot since Liang's time. The Confucian institutions, such as academies, are long

[28] *Morning Talks*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 2, 41

[29] *Morning Talks*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 2, 40

[30] *Morning Talks*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 2, 42–44

[31] *Substance of Chinese Culture*, in *Complete Works*, Vol. 3, 111

[32] For a comparison with the kibbutz, see Gu Hongliang 顾红亮 (2008).

gone. Some scholars describe Confucianism today as having lost its cultural basis and being reduced to a purely academic discourse. It has been described as a wandering spirit (*youhun* 幽魂) (Yu Yingshi 2004) and a "lost soul" (Makeham 2008). It is no surprise therefore that many are calling for the need to foster new forms of communities in order for Confucianism to be alive in the twenty-first century. This may not be the model of rural communities as it was experimented by Liang. Yet, Liang saw clearly that the revival of an authentic Confucianism would mostly happen in the popular culture, as distinguished from the official culture or the academic culture.

Since the last decade, we precisely saw this model of popular Confucianism (*minjian rujia* 民间儒家) spreading. As in Liang's case, there are individual initiatives starting from men and women who have experienced a kind of conversion and associate with others sharing the same belief. For example, in 2005 in Anhui province, was founded the *Lujiang Center for traditional culture and education* (*Lujiang chuantong wenhuajiaoyu zhongxin* 庐江传统文化教育中心), and not much later, was founded in Shandong province the *Qingyun Academy* (*Qingyun shuyuan* 庆云书院). These centers provide to teachers and educators a moral training of half a year, mostly based on the study and the practice of the *Dizigui* 弟子规. After the training, people are expected to be active in their capacity of teachers to educate the young generation about Confucian morality. Same as for Liang, the focus is about the moral transformation of the individual in view of the collectivity, which can be described as a form of "collective subjectivation," by which the deepest emotions of the individual become factors of communitarian cohesion.[33] By avoiding the two extremes of individualism and collectivism, individuals develop a strong interiority oriented toward the collectivity. This is precisely this balance or perhaps better this tension between the two, which allows the criticism of some degenerate ways of life in modern society.

Yet, after reading the accounts about these two new communities, it seems to me that they are too moralistic in their approach of the society, which may make them often irrelevant. Also, even though these new communities or associations may have found some support from the local government, they have difficulty to last because the central government does not promote communities that it does not directly control and may challenge its moral authority.

These experiments suggest the possibility of creating cultural associations with strong ties between members and which take as mission to spread the message of Confucius through educational programs. Liang reminds us that it is not enough to read, learn, and repeat the *Analects*. Confucian communities need to be socially engaged, because, first, it is the only way for their members to really understand the concrete life and difficulties of people and, second, because the spiritual message of Confucianism has to deal with concrete social issues in order to bring changes in mentalities and social structures.

[33] For a detailed account of the experiment at the *Lujiang Center for traditional culture and education* and this category of "collective subjectivation," see Guillaume Dutournier and Ji Zhe (2009).

8.6 Conclusion

I have presented here what seem to me the most valuable ideas in Liang's interpretation of Confucianism, as being an ethics and a spirituality which are deeply grounded in the inner self and in society. In this regard, Confucianism can make an important contribution to the world culture. As I see, the specter of a Global Confucianism should not haunt us, but I think that we can be reasonably optimistic to see the dawn of a Globalized Confucianism emerging, not by placing itself above other traditions, but existing in symbiosis with them.

Here, I would like to finish with a last enquiry. Will Confucianism benefit from the new status of China as a superpower, or on the contrary, will the rise of China make people in the world more suspicious about Confucianism? The answer will have to be found in the capacity of Confucianism to recognize its historical roots in China and yet to express a Confucian discourse which transcends its particular history and make it meaningful at the level of all humanity. Yet, the acceptation of Confucianism as a universal discourse may be hindered if it is identified too closely to China as a nation, and particularly to the Chinese state, especially if Confucianism becomes part of a state ideology. History provides us a few examples of great religious and philosophical traditions which have developed in foreign lands. We may think of Buddhism born in India, where it has almost completely disappeared, developing elsewhere. We may think of Christianity born in the Middle East, where it has almost completely disappeared, developing elsewhere. We may hope that Confucianism develop in China, but who knows if it will not develop elsewhere.

References

Thierry Meynard, *The Religious Philosophy of Liang Shuming* (Brill: Boston, 2011)

Umberto Bresciani, *Reinventing Confucianism* (Taipei: Ricci Institute, 2001), 83

Tu Weiming and Mary Evelyn Tucker, eds., *Confucian Spirituality* (New York: Crossroads, 2003-2004), 2 vols.

Marcel Gauchet, *Le désenchantement du monde* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985). Concerning the application of Gauchet's model to China, see Benoît Vermander, *L'Empire sans milieu, Essai sur la "sortie de la religion" en Chine* (Paris: DDB, 2010).

Sébastien Billioud, Joël Thoraval, "Lijiao: le retour en Chine continentale de cérémonies en l'honneur de Confucius," in *Perspectives Chinoises* 2009/4: 87-1007

Yu Yingshi 余英时, *Xiandai ruxue de huigu yu zhanwang* 现代儒学的回顾与展望 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2004), 53-58.

John Makeham, *Lost Soul, "Confucianism" in Contemporary Chinese Academic Discourse*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008).

David Ownby, "Kang Xiaoguang: Social Science, Civil Society, and Confucian Religion," in *China Perspectives* 2009/4: 101–111

Yu Yingshi余英时, *Cong jiazhixitong kan Zhongguo wenhua de xiandai yiyi* 从价值系统看中国文化的现代意义 *[Looking at the modern meaning of Chinese tradition from the system of values]* (Taipei: Shibao wenhua chubangongsi 时报文化出版剐司, 1984)

Tang Yijie 汤一介, *Rudaoshi yu neizaichaoyue wenti* 儒道释与内在超越问题 *[Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism and the question of immanent transcendence]* (Nanchang南昌: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe 江西人民出版社, 1991

Anne Cheng, *Histoire de la Pensée Chinoise* (Paris, Seuil, 1997), 68–71

Gu Hongliang 顾红亮, *Rujia shenghuo shijie* 儒家生活世界 *[The Confucian Lifeworld]* (Shanghai: Shangghai Renmin Chubanshe 上海人民出版社, 2008)

Guillaume Dutournier, Ji Zhe, "Expérimentation sociale et Confucianisme populaire," in *Perspectives Chinoises* 2009/4: 71–86

Chapter 9
Liang Shuming's Conception of Democracy

Hongliang Gu

Democracy is one dimension in the process of the reconstruction of Confucianism. Liang Shuming's interpretation of democracy embodies his unique vision of rebuilding Confucianism. This uniqueness links to John Dewey's philosophy of democracy and could trigger an interesting debate on Confucian democracy. There have been many studies of how Hu Shih (胡适) and Tao Xingzhi (陶行知) understood and practiced Deweyan democracy (Barry Keenan 1977; Gu Hongliang 2000; Tan Sor-hoon 2004a; Jessica Ching-sze Wang 2007). However, Liang Shuming's view of democracy and its relation with Deweyan philosophy have more or less been neglected by academics.[1]

This article addresses how Dewey's view of democracy, as expressed in his book *Democracy and Education*, influenced Liang Shuming's conception of democracy. It shows how Liang followed his own philosophical inclinations in understanding Dewey, ultimately proposing his idea of "Confucian democracy" that is different from Dewey's definition of democracy.

[1] For example, one article written by Hung-Yok Ip that pointed that Liang's idea of democracy demonstrates three commitments, which are nation-oriented utilitarianism, individual-oriented utilitarianism, and the autonomous value of democracy. However he did not analyze the relation between John Dewey and Liang. See Hung-Yok Ip (1991).

H. Gu (✉)
East China Normal University, Shanghai, China

Harvard-Yenching Institute, Cambridge, MA, USA
e-mail: hlgu@admin.ecnu.edu.cn

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd
and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*,
China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_9

9.1 The Influence of Deweyan Thought on Liang Shuming

Liang Shuming was representative of the modern Neo-Confucianism. He has been labeled as Conservative by some scholars. His thought was eclectic, incorporating Henri Bergson's philosophy of life; Confucianism, including Wang Yangming's philosophy; Buddhism; and so on. Although Liang did not definitely declare that Dewey's philosophy was the main source of his ideas, one thing is certain: Liang admitted that Dewey's philosophy had its value. In his old age, when Liang was interviewed by an American scholar, Professor Guy S. Alitto, he said: "Dewey's philosophy had its value ……his thoughts are not superficial, but very flexible; his mind is active and deep" (Liang Shuming 2006). From 1919 to 1921, when Dewey visited China, he gave many lectures in various places in China. Most of his lectures attracted immediate attention from the media and academic circles. As a result, Dewey was hailed as an intellectual star. At Peking University, he gave a series of lectures: *Social and Political Philosophy*, *Types of Thinking*, *Three Philosophers of the Modern Period*, and so on, which later came out as a volume in Chinese titled *Dewey's Five Major Lectures*. As luck would have it, Liang was teaching philosophy at Peking University from 1917 to 1924 and had attended the banquet in honor of Dewey held by the Philosophy Research Association of Peking University, thus becoming acquainted with Dewey's thought. Liang actually quoted some of Dewey's lectures in his book: *Eastern and Western Cultures and Their Philosophies* (Dongxi wenhua jiqi zhexue 《东西文化及其哲学》).[2] Talking about the philosophy of life, Liang even thought of Dewey's philosophy of pragmatism as the perfect development of the Western philosophy (Liang Shuming 1989).

Moreover, Liang gave further credit to Dewey's philosophy: "We have discovered something from each other" (Liang Shuming 1993). That so-called something, in my view, is the idea of life. Liang thought that the focus of Dewey's philosophy is life. The idea of life is what attracted Liang to Dewey's concept of democracy. In some sense, Liang's attitude is understandable. Dewey started with the explanation of his conception of life in his book, *Democracy and Education*, by drawing the main distinction between the living and inanimate beings with the idea that the former have their lives, and renewed them by making use of environmental conditions. Dewey said: "It is the very nature of life to strive to continue in being. Since this continuance can be secured only by constant renewals, life is a self-renewing process" (John Dewey 1980). Man, as the highest living being, has not only biological life but also social life. The continuity of social life must rely on education and a special type of transmission of knowledge which takes place from the older to the younger. This is not only the process of transmission of knowledge but also of ritual-and-custom and culture. Hence, Dewey concluded that education is a necessity of life. Life is a basic concept in Dewey's philosophy of education.

[2] Concerning the welcome banquet, please see Liang Shuming (1991). Liang quoted some contents of Dewey's lectures. On the quotation, see Liang Shuming (1989), p. 347, p. 484, p. 503.

Although Liang pointed out that the concept of life played an important role in Dewey's philosophy, what he understood about Dewey's concept of life is very different from Dewey's own perspective. Liang thought that the cosmos constitutes a life that is moving actively. Among cosmic lives, the human heart-and-mind is the most active, namely, individual life. The recognition of the heart-and-mind leads to the understanding of cosmic life. Education is important to the recognition of the human heart-and-mind and bridges the individual life and the social life. This is Liang's understanding of the essence of Dewey's concept of life, in which we can find some traces of Henri Bergson's philosophy of life and Confucianism. In his book, *Eastern and Western Cultures and Their Philosophies* (1922), Liang had reinterpreted Confucius' idea of benevolence using Bergson's theory of intuition. Benevolence is thus characterized by a kind of moral intuition. A few years later, in the 1930s, he still held onto the fundamental positions in Bergson's philosophy and Confucianism in his reading of Dewey's conception of life.

Theoretically speaking, Liang Shuming's appreciation of Dewey's philosophy is not indicative of Dewey's philosophical influence on him. When talking about influence, we need to produce evidence. As regards democracy, we have more specific evidence to show. Liang Shuming's view of democracy was influenced by Dewey's philosophy of democracy as the following two points demonstrate:

Firstly, Liang knew of Dewey's ideas of democracy, which he got mainly from Dewey's *Democracy and Education*, which was one of Liang's main sources for the idea of democracy. Liang made a speech in Shandong Rural Reconstruction Institute with the topic of *The Reading Method and Essence of Dewey's "Democracy and Education"*(Duwei minbenzhuyi yu jiaoyu de dufa jiqi genben guannian 《杜威〈民本主义与教育〉的读法及其根本观念》) or *The Essence of Dewey's Philosophy of Education*(Duwei jiaoyu zhexue zhi genben guannian 《杜威教育哲学之根本观念》). This lecture provides us with firsthand material from which we can discern the intellectual relationship between Liang and Dewey and observe Liang's familiarity with Dewey's book. Liang also once quoted some paragraphs from this book when he wrote his book: *The Theory of Rural Reconstruction* (Xiangcun jianshe lilun 《乡村建设理论》). Based on those facts, we can conclude that Liang Shuming's stance on democracy was more or less influenced by Dewey's.

Secondly, generally speaking, rural reconstruction was a constitutive part of the Common People's Education and National Self-Salvation Movements. Liang's idea of rural reconstruction was influenced by the Common People's Education Movement, as seen in the establishment of Tao Xingzhi's Xiaozhuang Experimental Village Normal School(Xiaozhuang shiyan xiangcun shifan xuexiao 晓庄实验乡村师范学校). Liang visited Xiaozhuang Village Normal School and took an appreciatory attitude toward teaching methods such as the combination of teaching-learning-doing and student-centered teaching, which were practiced by Tao Xingzhi. He also endorsed actions that Xiaozhuang Village Normal School had carried out: students' self-government, cooperation, and democratic management. He thought students in this school had the ability to live in communities. The nurture of such an ability is very important in Liang Shuming's view of democracy. As we all know, Tao Xingzhi's common people's education movement was directly influenced by

Dewey's educational thought. The concepts "Life is education" and "the combination of teaching-learning-doing" which Tao Xingzhi advocated came from Dewey's thought, including such ideas as "education is life" and "learning by doing". Therefore, Liang appreciated Tao Xingzhi's educational practice and theory, which reflects the fact that Liang Shuming's rural reconstruction and his practice of democracy were indirectly influenced by Dewey's philosophy of democratic education.

9.2 Liang Shuming's Understanding of Deweyan Democracy

Liang Shuming, as a modern Neo-Confucian, definitely denied that China should take the Western democratic road. He thought Western democratic politics could not be compatible with the Chinese national spirit. However, he thought that the development of modern China must take in the Western democratic ideas and try to combine the Confucian ethical tradition with Western democracy, especially with Dewey's conception of democracy. In the practice of rural reconstruction in the 1930s, Liang put forward the idea of "majority politics with rule by man" (Renzhi de duoshu zhengzhi 人治的多数政治). I would like to borrow the term Confucian democracy, from Roger T. Ames' and Sor-hoon Tan's writings (Ames 2002; Tan Sor-hoon 2004b), and call Liang Shuming's idea Confucian democracy, although Liang did not use this term in his books. The sources of Liang Shuming's idea of Confucian democracy are multifold, and their two main branches are Confucianism and Dewey's notion of democracy. To some extent, Liang Shuming's view of Confucian democracy is the result of the dialogue between Dewey's (and Western) democratic thought and Confucianism.

At least four components of Liang Shuming's view of Confucian democracy are related to and deeply impacted by Dewey's thought on democracy.

Firstly, Liang thought that democracy is categorically a spirit. This categorization of democracy was influenced by Dewey's statement that "democracy is a way of living."

The brightest point in Liang Shuming's theory of democracy is the assertion that democracy is not only a system but also a kind of spirit. The spirit of democracy includes five aspects: acknowledging others (chengren pangren 承认旁人), equality (pingdeng 平等), yielding to reason(jiangli 讲理), ruling by majority (qujue duoshu 取决多数), and respecting individual freedom (zunzhong geren ziyou 尊重个人自由). Acknowledging others means regarding others and self as equal subjects, having equal status in social affairs and civil rights. Yielding to reason is associated with freedom of speech. At moments of conflicts and troubles, the spirit of democracy would guide people to employ reason, not to resort to force. Free discussion and negotiation on equal terms are the basic ways to solve problems in a democratic society. Ruling by majority can be interpreted as resulting from the need to respect people's rights. Respecting individual freedom can be understood broadly as protecting individual rights, including civil rights. Although an individual needs to follow the majority's choice, he still has the right to keep his opinion, and nobody is

justified in depriving others of their rights of free speech. Individual freedom is a basic right in modern democratic society. Those five aspects form the spirit of modern democracy, as Liang Shuming conceived of it.

There are some similarities between Liang Shuming's spirit of democracy and the view of democracy delineated in Dewey's book, *Democracy and Education*. In this book, Dewey stated: "A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience" (John Dewey 1980, p. 93), which clearly shows that Dewey understood democracy on the level of living. Here "associated" does not mean contractual association, but means value-oriented cooperation. Therefore democracy, as a mode of associated living, may lead people to an ideal way of living, for instance, an equal, rational, and free way of living. Thus Dewey's notion of democracy expresses an ideal of common living, which shares similarities with Liang's democratic spirit.

While reading Dewey's writings, Liang was inspired by Dewey's ideal of democracy, viewed democracy as a mode of living and as the communication of heart-and-mind, and understood Dewey's democracy in terms of soul, attitude, and spirit. When Liang retold Dewey's concept of democracy, he said: "There is only material intercourse and spacial proximity, without the intercommunication of heart-and-mind, in the society that has rejected democracy" (Liang Shuming 1993, p. 699). This retelling takes a different path from Dewey's. Liang understood Deweyan democracy in light of a Confucian philosophy of heart-and-mind. According to Liang, democracy as a way of living is interpreted as democratic spirit, and democracy as a way of communication of experience is understood as a way of communication of mind. Liang did not realize he had misread Deweyan democracy. In fact he demonstrated his own concept of Confucian democracy by introducing Deweyan democracy.

Secondly, from the angle of democratic spirit, Liang thought that ancient China had its own idea of democracy, which was different from modern Western democracy. Compared to the West, China's thought on democracy was lacking in two aspects: democratic group living (or the principle of majority rule) and the conception of individual rights. Taking the first point, as regards democratic group living, Liang thought that an ideal democratic community would be a combination of participation and communication. Participation includes two sides: One is the members of this community who participate in public affairs, and the other is interaction among communities. The more important is the first one. Compared with the private circle, community affairs are in the public arena. Liang thought that in a democratic society, an individual has the ability to participate in public affairs, which would then allow them to establish the community as a place where people can communicate and negotiate freely. "Organizing ability is the ability to be a member of a group. On public affairs, individuals participate in open negotiation. This is democracy" (Liang Shuming 1992, p. 333). Here Liang Shuming's idea of participant democracy is vividly portrayed.

This idea was also influenced by Dewey's thought on democracy. Liang had summarized Dewey's idea of the democratic individual: "Members of a democratic society can participate in the public tendency" (Liang Shuming 1993, p. 699). For

Dewey, the degree of individual participation increases with the extent of democratization of the community. In Liang Shuming's practice of Confucian democracy, he followed Dewey's idea. Liang said that he did not like to use the term "minzhi" (democracy 民治) and would like to use one sentence to express the same meaning: "In a community, most members should actively take part in community living" (Liang Shuming 1990a, p. 292). This is the basis of Liang's democracy.

Thirdly, Liang's Confucian democracy is not only a political concept but also an ethical conception. Confucian democracy has some moral meaning, as is shown by the category of "lixing" (impersonal feeling, impartial feeling, ethical feeling 理性).[3] Starting with psychology, Liang pointed out that heart-and-mind has an "impersonal feeling," which is beyond instinct and reason. If reason means the ability to calculate and organize subjects, then "impersonal feeling" means selfless emotion – a calm heart-and-mind without selfish desire and obsessed ideas. The development of ethical "feeling" is a process of growth of an ethical lifeworld, as well as progress in establishing a rural democratic community. The ideal rural organization is a community full of "impersonal feeling."

In *The Theory of Rural Reconstruction*, Liang quoted Dewey's statements from *Democracy and Education* in support of his opinions. Dewey said: "A large number of human relationships in any social group are still upon the machine-like plane. Individuals use one another so as to get desired results, without reference to the emotional and intellectual disposition and consent of those used."[4] One ill phenomenon criticized by Dewey in Western democratic society is that human relationships are woven on interests-first principles, which are tantamount to mechanical relationships. Liang regarded those communities criticized by Dewey as mechanical organizations and thought of Confucian ideal communities as "feeling," that is to say democratic, organizations. Such democratic communities were endowed with the moral meaning by Liang. There is no conflict between Liang and Dewey's view of democracy. Dewey said definitely: "Democracy has many meanings, but if it has a moral meaning, it is found in resolving that the supreme test of all political institutions and industrial arrangements shall be the contribution they make to the all-around growth of every member of society" (John Dewey 1960). In Liang Shuming's opinion, the moral meaning of democracy in Dewey's works is the development of individual ethical life in democratic community, which is consistent with the development of "impersonal feeling."

Fourthly, Liang believed that the practice of democracy could not be isolated from education. The Rural Reconstruction Movement was not only a movement of rebuilding a new society but also a democratic and educational movement. Regarding the relationship between democracy and education, Liang was influenced by Dewey in two aspects.

[3] Liang Shuming borrowed the term "impersonal feeling" from Bertrand Russell's book, *The Principles of Social Reconstruction.*

[4] John Dewey (1980), p.8. On Liang Shuming's quotation, see Liang Shuming (1990a), pp. 310–311, pp. 565–566; Liang Shuming (1990b), p. 303.

The first aspect is the unity of education and democracy. Liang thought the rural organization he wanted to establish would be a democratic community and an educational organization or a special school. The idea that meanings of democracy and education were unified in the process of building a rural organization comes from Dewey. Dewey thought that ideal of democracy implies the possibility of the free development of human nature and nurture of daily life. To turn this possibility into reality, education is necessary. Education is a kind of meaningful communication. Democracy will be a free and abundant communication by means of such education. Liang represents Dewey's thought as follows: "Dewey's democracy resides in filling up all gaps, making humans more interconnected, more reformable, more self-renewable, and more improvable. This is the meaning of education and life" (Liang Shuming 1993, p. 699). Democracy and education become a union in terms of free communication. Here Liang grasped the essence of Deweyan democracy.

The second aspect is the notion of growth. As we all know, "growth" is a basic concept of Dewey's educational philosophy. Dewey regarded education as a growing process with reorganization of children's experiences. He said: "The educative process is a continuous process of growth, having as its aim at every stage an added capacity of growth" (John Dewey 1980, p. 59). In Liang's eyes, growth is the character of life. "Deweyan education is to take hold of man's whole life," that is, to take hold of a student's growth. Liang said with approval, "What growth means to Dewey is to make human grow, grow……without end. This is a good insight" (Liang Shuming 1993, p. 690). The concept of growth does not only describe human individual life but also social life. Social life often develops in various modes of community living. Only democratic community living gains the implication of growth. When Liang applied the Deweyan conception of growth to his experiment with rural reconstruction, he regarded the new rural organization as a democratic and educational community, thus as a growing community. He said: "Our rural reconstruction is to establish a social organization; while social organization, as I have often mentioned, is in a process of slow growth and development" (Liang Shuming 1990a, p. 337). This judgment made by Liang was strongly influenced by Dewey's thought of education as growth.

To some extent, Dewey's view of democracy inspired Liang Shuming's thinking of the compatibility of Confucian culture and the democratic spirit, which then facilitated his formation of the idea of Confucian democracy.

9.3 The Basic Points of Liang's Confucian Democracy

From the above analysis, it is clear that Liang Shuming's concept of democracy was dramatically similar to Dewey's, and this similarity is attributable to Dewey's influence. The democracy with the rural features that Liang brought forward can be viewed as an integration of Confucianism and Dewey's (and some other Western) thought on democracy; therefore it is a kind of Confucian democracy. This view of democracy is rooted in Confucianism, which distinguishes Liang from Dewey in their thought on democracy.

Some scholars have regarded Confucian democracy as a paradoxical term, a claim rejected by Roger T. Ames from the angle of communitarianism. He argues that Confucianism is consistent with Dewey's concept of democracy (Hall and Ames 1999). On the other hand, Sor-hoon Tan contends that "not only is a Confucian democracy not a contradiction in terms, but … it in many ways might compete with Western liberal models as an alternative ideal" (Tan Sor-hoon 2004b). However, for my part, there is not only consistency but also tension between Confucianism and Dewey's (and other Western) thought on democracy. Here, I do not want to abstractly argue about a contrary conception of Confucian democracy but to point out that Liang has already creatively put forward an idea of Confucian democracy, which differs from Dewey's understanding, in the practice of rural reconstruction in the 1930s. This is modern Neo-Confucianism's typical idea of democracy, the essential tenet of which is democratic spirit, to which we should pay more attention. Liang Shuming's view of Confucian democracy points to the possibility of another democracy and modernity.

One major point in an article John Dewey published in English in November 1919 is that Chinese possessed a democratic spirit and such had been historically manifested in ancient China in the absence of class, the prevalence of social and civil equality, and the control of individuals and groups by moral rather than physical force. In the process of China's reform, we need to preserve and reconstruct the democratic spirit, rather than to mechanically apply Western democracy to China. Some believe that there are many approaches to reform of China's politics, for example, readjusting the power relationship between the central government and the regional governments, rebuilding the relations of the executive and legislative forces, and revising legal procedure and laws. These approaches have all evolved from Western political thought and fail to grasp the essence of the problems confronting China. Dewey thus claimed that the real problem was how the democratic spirit could find an organized expression of itself (John Dewey 1983). Dewey's statement assumes that China's democracy should emerge from within the Confucian tradition, which is a position very close to Liang Shuming's viewpoint. Liang also admitted the existence of a democratic spirit in the ancient history of China which included acknowledging others, equality, yielding to reason but was short of rule by majority, and respecting individual freedom. Thus, the main task of Confucian democracy is to expand the nascent democratic spirit and to integrate Confucianism with individual rights of freedom and majority rule. Following this logic, Liang Shuming's Confucian democracy can be reflected in two types of relationships: One is the relationship between responsibility and rights; the other one is the relationship between meritocratic politics (xianzhe zhengzhi 贤者政治) and democratic politics.

Firstly, as far as the relationship between ethics and democracy, or between responsibility and rights, is concerned, Liang Shuming's view of democracy was fundamentally in tune with Confucian ethics and the idea of a moral lifeworld. In Liang Shuming's opinion, the core categories of Confucian ethics are "responsibility" and the ethical "impersonal feeling." In the context of the Chinese language, ethics refers to human relationships. Confucianism put forward the proposition that the

ideal ethical condition is one of mutual respect and taking responsibilities for each other. Comparatively, in modern Western society, liberals believe that the initial principle of interpersonal association is respect for individual rights and that the protection of individual rights from violation is the main mission of the government under the rule of law. Therefore, it is "responsibility," not rights that became the basic principle of Confucian ethics.

How should people realize real ethical "responsibility"? The answer, Liang answers, lies in people's natural endowment with ethical "feeling." Equipped with this, people can comprehend why we must and how we can fulfill the "responsibility" for others. Taking "responsibility" and "impersonal feeling" as the basis, Confucian ethics builds a new living world, and this was the ethical foundation of Liang Shuming's assumptions of Confucian democracy.

Furthermore, the core of Liang Shuming's idea of democracy rests upon the same Confucian privileging of "responsibility" over rights. "Responsibility" takes priority over "rights." That is to say, Liang thought that a Confucian democratic community was firstly a responsible or ethical community, not a community of rights or politics. Rights, as derivatives of "responsibility," are only acknowledged inside a responsible community. Liang said: "Everyone should first fulfill his own responsibility before being granted rights. Rights should not be claimed. This is the principle of Chinese ethical society. When everyone fulfills his responsibility, rights would naturally emerge" (Liang Shuming 1990b, p. 93). Rights merely inhere in the practice of ethical "responsibility" and do not precede "responsibility." In other words, democracy is not the highest principle. We should resort to a higher ethical standard and put democracy to an ethical test. This explanation indicates that Liang understood democracy particularly from the moral level and believed that democracy has a moral meaning in its original sense.

In modern China, people's consciousness of rights is very weak. The sociopolitical system that protects civil rights has not been built up systematically. Under these circumstances, Liang Shuming's view of Confucian democracy that advocates the priority of "responsibility" has a potential risk, namely, lack of knowledge about individual rights.

Secondly, in regard to the relationship between meritocratic politics and democratic politics, John Dewey definitely supported democracy and the rule of law. While traditional Confucianism was in favor of the former, it put less emphasis on the latter and instead supported rule by man. Liang's idea of Confucian democracy rejected either of these views and argued for the harmony between the rule of law and rule by man and the combination of meritocratic politics and majority politics; the result of the harmony was the so-called majority politics with rule by man. He said: "Our meritocratic politics rests upon the idea of a majority led by virtuous and respectable persons. In one way, it is really majority politics, for the majority is active rather than passive; but it is ruled by man not by law, for it regards outstanding living persons as the most authoritative, rather than inflexible law" (Liang Shuming 1990a, p.292). Here "person" refers to the wiser Confucian or virtuous person (xianzhe 贤者). On what ground does the virtuous person have qualifications to be a judge in a democratic community? As mentioned above, for Liang, ethical "impersonal

feeling" is the basis of democracy. Those who act on "impersonal feeling" certainly act with a democratic spirit. The virtuous person is exactly the representative of this kind of ethical "feeling." Therefore rule by the virtuous persons does not mean that the minority virtuous opinion is allowed to overrule majority choice; if that happened, there would be no more democracy. Liang certainly embraced majority rule when he talked about the spirit of democracy. What Liang was saying is that if minority virtuous opinion is reasonable and justifiable, it must be comprehensible and acceptable to the majority. In ancient China, members of society were divided into four groups, scholars, farmers, workers, and businessmen, and among them scholars were looked upon as the virtuous persons, rich in the ethical "feeling." They were not only reasonable but also inspirational and provoked introspection in everyone so that they could keep an active heart-and-mind.

In a democratic community dominated by the virtuous, on the one hand, its members would be enthusiastic about participating in public affairs, creating new ritual-and-custom (lisu 礼俗), and enforcing the rule of law. Liang imagined it in these terms: "In a village, if its members can appreciate the relationships among themselves and make efforts to improve them, every family will have a wise person to attend the village conference who would devote themselves to the discussion of common problems. They would be able to draw a sensible conclusion on every issue. This, in my opinion, is the best and most workable democracy" (Liang Shuming 1990a, p. 326). On the other hand, the members listen to the teaching and decision of the wise men in order to prevent disruption and solve conflicts in time. The view of Confucian democracy as "the integration of politics and preaching" (zhengjiao heyi 政教合一) could be implemented in rural reconstruction in the 1930s.

In accordance with rule by man, Confucian democracy resorts first to ritual-and-custom before the legal system. Even though Chinese tradition attaches more importance to ritual-and-custom instead of law, Liang believed that we should also adopt the latter. The maintenance of ritual-and-custom does not mean sticking to old forms but creating fresh ones to push forward the process of democratization in China, for "ritual-and-custom points to the ideal towards which people make strenuous efforts, and the law, on the other hand, delineates the facts, and it is the obligation of the state to enforce the law and mete out punishments when it is violated" (Liang Shuming 1990b, p. 121). Liang thus advocated the practice of law under the premise of respecting ritual-and-custom. Therefore, unlike Western liberals, Liang did not aim to change China into a society ruled by law, but to maintain a society abiding by ritual-and-custom. Furthermore, Liang also believed that this Confucian democracy with its old and new ritual-and-custom was not only the direction of China's development but also the future of the West.

Generally speaking, Liang put forward a rough outline of Confucian democracy that contained elements of Dewey's thought on democracy. Borrowing the term from the German philosopher Albrecht Wellmer, we might also call Liang Shuming's Confucian democracy "the democratic form of ethical life." His democracy was actually the handmaid of the ethical life. Nevertheless, Liang Shuming's view of Confucian democracy still has specific theoretical values. Theoretically, it shows the possibility of a Confucian democracy different from Dewey's democracy with

Liang's Confucian democracy placing much more emphasis on the ethical meaning of democracy than Deweyan democracy.

Liang Shuming's view of Confucian democracy shows his reflective attitude toward modernity and the possibility of projecting another kind of modernity because democracy is an inner dimension of modernity. Instead of accepting the Western view of democracy completely, Liang critically engaged the rationality of democracy and carefully weighed the value of democracy in Confucian culture and the value of Deweyan democracy. This approach points to his expectation of a Confucian democracy and the imagination of a Confucian modernity.

9.4 Hermeneutic Approaches to Liang's Confucian Democracy

Liang believed in Confucianism on the one hand, and interpreted Deweyan democracy from his own point of view on the other, partly accepting Dewey's and other Western thought on democracy. Based on the dialogue between Confucianism and Dewey's and other Western philosophies of democracy, Liang ultimately put forward an idea that we might term Confucian democracy. This idea is an important theoretical contribution by Liang Shuming under the impact of Dewey's philosophy. Although Liang made great efforts in justifying this idea, it still remains controversial. It may be that he was not very successful in defending Confucian democracy in the sense that his definition was quite ambivalent. Some scholars may ask: Is the Confucian democracy that stresses responsibility and "impersonal feeling" real democracy? Liang's work does not fully dissipate doubts.

Although Liang Shuming's conception of Confucian democracy gives rise to some controversy, it nevertheless lends itself to several interpretations through various approaches.

One possible hermeneutic approach is to incorporate Deweyan democracy into Confucian ethical "feeling," leading to their integration. However, this integration has its theoretical tensions, especially when it comes to the relationship between democracy and ethical "feeling." On the one hand, Liang believed that Chinese culture is characterized by overwhelmingly strong and premature "impersonal feeling" and its apparently too weak rational capability. Therefore, Chinese culture has not begot the democratic way of life and democratic system as the West has. On the other hand, he sought to reconcile the "impersonal feeling" characteristic of Chinese culture with the spiritual resource of democracy. That is to say, he had the ambition to develop democracy based on "impersonal feeling." Those two aspects constitute a pair of stances that seem to be in tense relation. An American Professor, Guy S. Alitto, expressed this puzzle to Liang Shuming face to face, but Liang answered simply that there is no contradiction between the two.[5] How then can one understand the abovementioned tension? Here I illustrate it from two angles.

[5] Cf. Liang Shuming (2006), pp. 299–300

First of all, Liang adopted dual perspectives, the historical and the futuristic. To understand the tension between ethical "impersonal feeling" and democracy, we must understand Liang Shuming's philosophy of culture first. Liang divided the world into three different cultures, each having its own unique features, by considering intentions of "will" and the problems to be solved. One is Western culture that focuses on science and democracy; another is Chinese culture that features ethics; and the third is Indian culture, which is built upon religion. Viewed from the ideal sequence of culture development, world culture will experience the three types of culture one after another: Western culture, Chinese culture, and Indian culture. It is a sequential manifestation. Reflecting on past history, we can see that the "impersonal feeling" embedded in Chinese culture determined that it would take the ethical road from the very beginning instead of starting off on the scientific and democratic road. Democracy, as it had emerged in the West, was thus bypassed in the development of Confucian culture, and this constituted the historical cause of China's failure to develop democracy. The manifestation of this failure is the split between the ethical "feeling" and democracy. But, this does not mean the Chinese culture rejects democracy wholly; it only means China and the West have taken different roads. With opening up of China in modern era, the Chinese became aware of the antecedence of ethics and the lack of democracy in the Chinese culture. With this in mind, Liang took a futuristic perspective and argued for the absorption of democracy under ethics and the development of a Confucian democracy based on the "impersonal feeling." This reflects a continuum between ethical "feeling" and democracy. Nevertheless, in the split between ethical "feeling" and democracy, on the one hand, and in the possibility of establishing a continuum between them, on the other, we see one point of tension in Confucian democracy, which is between the historical and futuristic perspectives.

Secondly, Liang adopted both particularistic and universal dimensions. His definition of Chinese culture or ethical "feeling" culture is ambivalent: One refers to a special national culture or local culture; the other is related to the universal spirit. This kind of "ambivalence" can be found mainly in the following statement: "The Chinese spirit is the 'impersonal feeling of mankind'" (Liang Shuming 1992, p. 503). "Impersonal feeling" belongs to the whole of mankind in general and to Chinese people in particular, so it is both universal and particularistic. When he stated that the ethical "feeling" culture of China and the democratic culture of the West were completely different, Chinese culture, in his eyes, actually referred to a local culture with special features. When he said that it can be reconciled with democratic culture, Chinese culture refers to a global culture in a general sense. Tension and attraction exist between the ethical "feeling" and democracy in both local and global cultures, and such a tension was inherent in Liang's idea of Confucian democracy.

Thus we can infer that the Confucian democracy itself is a conception with inner tensions in Liang's philosophy of culture. It is these tensions that perhaps make Liang's view of Confucian democracy full of apparent "contradictions," but, at the same time, it is these tensions that give his philosophy vigor and allow for further development as well.

Another possible hermeneutic approach is to have Confucian ethical "feeling" govern democracy in the sense that ethical "feeling" is above democracy. Since Confucian ethics is typologically different from democratic ideology, the location of the two systems at different levels allow for ethical "feeling" to resolve some of the problems of democracy. When Liang Shuming said that responsibility should take precedence over rights and ritual-and-custom over laws, he did not mean that rights and laws should be completely abandoned in lieu of responsibility and ritual-and-custom, but that ethical "feeling" should be employed to regulate the operation of rights and laws. The reason for this is that rights and laws are not the ultimate social goals. They should be placed under the governance of ethical "feeling." One of Liang's critiques of Dewey is that Dewey's book, *Democracy and Education,* captures the function (yong, 用) of life, but not its essence (ti, 体) (Liang Shuming 1993, p. 701), suggesting that Dewey does not fully understand ethical "feeling," which, in Liang's mind, is the essence of life; democracy, to Liang, is merely its function. Liang would argue, just as the essence of life is the foundation for the function of life, so ethical "feeling" is the groundwork which leads and governs democracy. Confucian democracy, as he had imagined, would be developed as the union of the essence and function of life and a witness to Confucian life. One can then argue that this Confucian democracy will support a kind of lifestyle that flourishes with vigor and vitality.

To some extent, these two hermeneutic approaches, supported by Liang Shuming's own books and articles, are reasonable. Both of them recognize the possibility of forming a Confucian democracy through the union of the ethical "feeling" and democracy. Their differences merely consist in how the union should take place.

9.5 Conclusion

To sum up, I contend that in his wrestling with the problem of democracy, Liang Shuming made not only theoretical contributions but practical ones as well. Theoretically, his idea of Confucian democracy points to the possibility of imagining another democratic form, different from that of the liberal paradigm, and of reconstructing Confucianism in the modern world. He assumes there will be diverse versions of democracy in future society, one of which will be Confucian democracy. However this does not mean that Liang Shuming had the last word on notion of democracy. Liang's writings do not mark the end of the topic but merely the beginning, having triggered off a series of debates on democracy. One point of our discussion is that there are different hermeneutic approaches to Liang's Confucian democracy, which demonstrates Liang does not solve the problem but poses more questions. Liang's Confucian democracy, with indeterminacy and ambivalence, provides room for us to think more deeply about another version of democracy. One of his legacies is to encourage people to rethink the implication, reorganization, and realization of Confucian democracy and its prospects for the future.

Certainly, for Liang, what counts is not just the discourse of Confucian democracy, but its practice and spirit. In practice, Liang's experiment with Confucian democracy in the 1930s Rural Reconstruction Movement could be regarded as a form of "creative democracy" such as that put forward by John Dewey. This sets us thinking: Confucian democracy is not only a theoretical issue but very much also a matter of social practice.

References

Barry Keenan, *The Dewey Experiment in China*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977

Gu Hongliang, *Misunderstanding Pragmatism--The Influence of John Dewey's Philosophy on Modern Chinese Philosophy*, Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2000

Tan Sor-hoon, *China's Pragmatist Experiment in Democracy: Hu Shih's Pragmatism and Dewey's Influence in China*, Metaphilosophy, Vol. 35, Nos.1/2, January 2004a

Tan Sor-hoon, *Confucian Democracy: A Deweyan Reconstruction*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004b, p.201.

Jessica Ching-sze Wang, *John Dewey in China: to Teach and to Learn*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007.

Hung-Yok Ip, *Liang Shuming and the idea of democracy in Modern China*, Modern China, Vol. 17, No. 4, Oct. 1991, pp.469-508.

Liang Shuming, *Complete Works*, Vol.1, Jinan: Shandong People Press, 1989, p.347, p.484, p.503.

Liang Shuming, *Complete Works*, Vol. 2, Jinan: Shandong People Press, 1990a, p.292.

Liang Shuming, *Complete Works*, Vol. 3, Jinan: Shandong People Press, 1990b, p.303.

Liang Shuming, *Complete Works*, Vol. 4, Jinan: Shandong People Press, 1991, p.219

Liang Shuming, *Complete Works*, Vol. 5, Jinan: Shandong People Press, 1992, p.333.

Liang Shuming, *Complete Works*, Vol. 7, Jinan: Shandong People Press, 1993, p.685.

Liang Shuming, *Has Man a Future?* Interviews by Guy S. Alitto, Beijing: The Orient Publishing Center, 2006, p.184.

John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, The Middle Works, 1899-1924, Volume 9, Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980, p.12.

John Dewey, *Transforming the Mind of China*, The Middle Works, 1899-1924, Volume 11, Carbondale and Edwardsville: South Illinois University Press, 1983, pp.212–213.

Roger T. Ames, *Seeking Harmony not Sameness: Comparative Philosophy and East-West Understanding*, Beijing: Peking University Press, 2002, p.214

John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, Boston: The Beacon Press, 1960, p.186.

David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames, *The Democracy of the Dead*, Chicago and Lasalle: Open Court Publishing Company, 1999, pp.165–187.

Chapter 10
Humankind Must Know Itself

Peishu Liang

I originally did not understand Confucianism, but now I understand a little. I understand a little because my father has died—when he was alive he spoke about it often, few people paid attention to his words. Therefore, I would like to repeat a bit of what he said. This is why I am standing before you today.

I will keep to his opinions and explain some of his ideas. The purpose of this volume is to discuss how to reconstruct Confucianism in this day and age. Doctrines necessarily fall into obscurity when society does not feel that they have value. It is difficult to conceive of Confucianism as having no value. Confucianism's fall into obscurity is a result of the strength and flourishing of Western culture, and for this reason Confucianism is seen as having no use. One hundred years later, Western culture is still strong, flourishing, and useful. But it is rather perplexing that the world's deep acceptance of Western culture has brought unease. Everyone knows what I am referring to here.

One day in the late 1970s, my father finished writing his last book, *The Human Heart and Human Life (人心与人生)*. On that day, he wrote in his diary: "I can leave (this world) now." The book opens with the following words: "The purpose of my book is to help mankind know itself, and at the same time introduce the thought of the ancient East into the intellectual world of today. The crisis of man-made calamities on the earth is urgent, yet quite unexpectedly we have no way of ameliorating them. Therefore, it may be permissible to say that humankind dominates the material world. But it is not permissible to say that humankind can freely do whatever it wishes. If human beings do not evolve into one family under heaven, then they are doomed to self-destruction." Is this not the international political and ecological situation we are facing today? It is impossible to summarize in one sentence all the factors that have led human history to this point. In the modern era, Westerners

P. Liang (✉)
American Research Institute, Beijing, China
e-mail: bbader@uchicago.edu

© Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing Co., Ltd
and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2015

G. Alitto (ed.), *Contemporary Confucianism in Thought and Action*,
China Academic Library, DOI 10.1007/978-3-662-47750-2_10

were so eager to be understand knowledgeable about the myriad of things in the world that they to seek self-knowledge. This has gradually led to a lopsidedness in learning throughout the entire world. Is this not one of the reasons?

Nowadays science has become so fully developed that we are able to unravel the various hidden mysteries of atoms and subatomic particles, and roam through outer space and set foot on the moon. The reason for this is that we have come to understand and then control and use matter—it cannot be said this is not resourceful on our part.

We now face a problem of the greatest importance—mankind cannot busy itself merely with understanding and mastering material things, we also have to understand ourselves. The one-sidedness within the world of scholarship is an expression of the fact that our entire mode of life has problems. This was known long ago, but it has never been as serious as it is today. I deeply believe that everyone attending here today feels the same way, and we all believe that we must rectify this imbalance.

Since age thirty, my father attempted to build a bridge between the two cultures. This last book implied that for him the bridge had been completed. The life of a single person is limited, and one can only busily work to finish what one can. This project requires the continued efforts of many people over many generations. Allow me to speculate further: Can we continue to delve into this question with a consensus? Not necessarily. But I will be satisfied with at least raising the question here.

I would like to be able to enter straight into this question, but unfortunately I cannot. Setting aside everything else, even if we gradually achieve a clear understanding of humanity, we cannot neglect the question of animals. Animals have their own societies, but they have no minds. Their societies are based on a division of labor based on the differentiation of the physical body, and they cannot develop further than this. Humans have bodies and minds. Bodies separate people, and minds link them together. Humankind society is based on human consciousness that is without barriers between people. Only humankind is capable of transcending domination by instinct. Only humankind can achieve culture. Only humankind has intelligence and reason. Only human society continuously develops.

At first, he worked to explain how it was that humankind had developed different cultures. But, as we know, to continuously pursue this question results in other questions. Therefore, coming to know humanity itself became his next topic. As a result of this, we have to return to his starting point: the key is to discuss how he treated humanity's creation of cultures and the reasons why their achievements are different. Humankind has always faced many problems. These challenges can be categorized into three kinds. Humanity has as a result taken three separate paths. Because humanity has "made different efforts," it has as a result developed cultures with three separate tendencies. Note that because different efforts have been made, as a result the methods of solving problems are different. When a certain effort continued with time, it would shape people's attitudes toward life.

The first attitude concentrates effort on obtaining things that are needed. The result of this is to alter the situation. Note that this is directed at needs within the material world, so that in the end there is always a way to address them. The second

attitude does not call for changing the situation. Rather, the method of addressing the problem of needs is to alter one's own desires. Therefore, "the criteria for fulfillment or failure in fulfillment are not fixed." Because of this, the issue involved implicates the subjective state of the "the other." The third attitude seeks to eliminate the problem or challenge altogether. This goes against the nature of life itself.

My father believed that Western culture took up the first attitude toward life and that Chinese culture took up the second attitude toward life. All of you seated here today must be waiting to find out what this has to do with the question of humanity coming to know itself. The first attitude relates to material things. The attitude one holds toward obtaining or satisfying this type of desire is such that, even if the desires are difficult to realize, there will be a solution in the long run. The second type of attitude relates to not seeking to control the hearts and minds of others, but rather the method of solving problems has to result in compromise and moderation. In addition, the question of fulfillment is not taken as given. This is to say that the first attitude foregrounds the relation between man and objects, while the second foregrounds the relation between man and man. With regard to objects, things can be taken by force. With regard to the hearts and minds of others, the use of force is extremely perverse. My father directly referred to the former as the culture of objects and the second as the culture of the human interior (the heart/mind).

At this point, we can take a step further and approach another issue. My father believed that the development of human culture involved a successive replacement of one culture by another. That is, the culture of objects (Western culture) had over the past 200 or 300 years transformed the face of the earth. But Chinese culture, which had flourished early on, had suffered a thousand years of decline, to the point that it was on the verge of extinction today. Is there no use for the culture of the human interior? This is certainly not the case. Rather, its appearance did not match the needs of its time, for it matured too early. In my father's view, there is no question of whether a culture was good or bad, but only a question of whether it meets the needs of its time. It is certainly not the case that humanity does not need a culture of the heart, but rather that its time has not yet arrived. To put it more concretely, after the first path is finished, then one should take up the second path. To put this in another way, the world today is facing the transition toward the second path. The quote that I began with was an attempt by my father to put forth a new intellectual approach. After I became familiar with the process of my father's approach toward answering these questions, I came to feel that I had advanced in the measure of understanding humankind. I want to add a word here—the benefit my father received from reading the works of Western scholars was not only an increase in his knowledge but also the realization that Western scholarship had a certain bias and to use a Confucian eye to examine that which Western scholarship often ignores.

In the remarks that follow, I will not proceed in the chronological order of the discovery of these insights, but rather in the order of their importance. I believe that, relatively speaking, instinct is more important. "Appetites for food and sex are part of human nature" (as The Mengzi says). Confucians admit this, because these appetites arise from nature itself. The later discussion of "the difference between man and beast" continued for some time without reaching a definitive conclusion. The

scholarship of ancient China was a great distance from natural science on this question. The purpose of discussing the relationship between beasts and man was for the sake of helping people become better men. My father was drawn to the issue of instinct, but later he came to feel that Western scholarship had failed to grasp the real significance of this issue. The true significance is that aside from instinct, there is also an opposing nature. If there was no opposing nature, then in fact there would be no humanity. Human nature is the result of the victory of this opposing nature over instinct. Mankind's future lies in the continuation of this struggle.

I will raise a few examples of the instincts of animals for the sake of comparison and consideration. Instinct is a special capacity that exists from birth. Each aspect of instinct has its own use and meaning. Instinct does not arise from life experience. Intelligent living, however, is necessarily aided by experience. Instinct is knowledge and action; it is the unity of knowledge and action without any distinction between them. This is to say, once an animal encounters certain specific kinds of environments, they immediately and directly enter into and become active within specific stable relationships with those environments.

I will now turn to the question of humankind, with the purpose of pointing out the many differences between man and animals on this point. Those that rely on their instincts to live only require their own bodies as tools, but humanity is literally unable to live without the various tools that humans create outside of their own bodies. Those that rely on their instincts to live are able to survive from the day that they are born, and this continues for their whole lives. Humans are born without any abilities at all, but in the end can do virtually anything. Those that rely on their instincts to live will not escape from the natural state. But humans live through their own intelligence, not just according to nature. Because their lives depend on the nurture and acquisitions after their birth, they must learn before they can adjust to the lives of their fellows. Humans do not become members of society merely as a result of the maturation of their bodies.

These examples and the contrast I have drawn are all common knowledge. After bringing these up, my father said that it follows that the nature of human life is therefore different from that of animals. Humans have reached the point in which they rely on their own intelligence in order to live. Humans not only have bodies, but they also have minds. What follows from humans having minds? Is it necessary to further raise examples of the qualities of humans? It is not necessary. But there is one issue that must be raised. We know that humans also have instincts, and there are many aspects of life in which humans still rely on their instincts to live. If we don't look at this carefully, it would appear that instincts are all alike. But in reality, the existence of the human mind and the society that connects with it makes humans' instincts different from those of animals. This difference lies in the fact that humans' actions do not simply flow from the body as do those of animals. My father's book described animals as being "shackled" by their instincts. And what about us? Are we not shackled by our instincts? Humanity is different from animals in that it opposes its instincts. We should consider humanity from the standpoint of its contrast with animal instincts.

My father talked about religion in every book he wrote. The first book deals with the formation and development of religion and culture. Beginning with his second book, there was a shift in the purpose of talking about religion—he shifted toward discussing how the flourishing or non-flourishing of religions had affected the degree of openness and development of people's minds. What did he think of this? I will sum up for him in a single sentence: Humanity has made it this far by relying on religion, but in the future it will be even better if we do not rely on religion. By "even better," the point is that in the past humanity, especially in ancient times, needed more reassurance and inspiration than the people of today. Here is how he defined religion: "Religion necessarily takes as its business giving emotional comfort to and inspiring the ideals of people; religion must recognize that it controverts the basis of human knowledge." He also said: "The proof of religion is in its transcending the world…The mundane world is limited, but religion puts faith in the limitless. The mundane world is relative, but religion puts faith in the absolute. The mundane world is the cycle of birth and death, but puts faith in the eternal." "Accompanying the arrival of the notion of spirits and ghosts came the religious concepts of sin and blessedness, along with prayer, religious sacrifice, and all other religious behavior."

Everyone here should be able to understand his realistic view of religion. He also realistically viewed Confucius. He wrote, "Confucius did not have the essential qualities of religion. Confucius had a spirit that religion cannot have." That is, that Confucius had complete faith in humanity, in its knowledge of right and wrong. "Thus Confucius did not give people an arbitrary set of rules." Zaiwo asked if it was necessary to fulfill the rituals of mourning his parents' passing for 3 years. Zigong asked whether or not one could avoid sacrificing a lamb during the ritual at the inauguration of each month. Confucius was extremely mindful of ritual but he did not at all regard Zigong's question as impudent—he responded that you should consider this for yourself. This is something that is not possible in religion.

Everyone has his own understanding of Confucius. What filled my father with endless admiration was that Confucius's teachings always led people to examine themselves, to make efforts to improve themselves, and called on people to reflect (appealing to their reason) and make demands on themselves (appealing to their will). This is precisely the opposite of religion, which calls on people to set aside faith in themselves and their own efforts and instead put faith in and rely on others. Everyone knows that the type of rituals and fragmentary religion that later flourished in China was completely opposed to the spirit of Confucius and became a tool for binding people's minds—Chinese society was almost equivalent to a religious society. But even though this was the case, my father still believed that when the Chinese people rid themselves of this obstruction in their spirit, they would not on the contrary ask for a religion to replace it. The Chinese people have open minds. Think for a moment on why it is that foreign cultures encountered very few obstacles when entering China. The Chinese people have open minds.

My father often spoke of religion. He had really thought this through quite well. But how can one make judgments on this and related questions about humanity? His most important opinion was that religion teaches people to give up faith in them-

selves and to believe in others and to substitute a sense of sin and holiness for a sense of right and wrong. To put it another way, this is the aspect of Confucius's spirit most worth of recognizing and adopting. If there is something else that needs discussing, it is that religion exacerbates humanity's limitations and tendency toward exclusivity. At the most fundamental level, it is difficult for people to be free of alienation from others because of the nature of their bodies, and religion teaches people to exclude others.

Confucius's teachings helped elevate the bearing of the Chinese people. Confucius put great emphasis on ritual but he did not by any means mythologize it. As the *Book of Rites* says, "It does not come down from heaven, it does not come forth from the earth; it is simply the expression of the human feelings." The standard is not on the outside, but on the inside, and not static, but flexible. Please note that the standard being "not on the outside but on the inside" relates to Confucianism's fundamental attitude, through which it evolved into a culture that works on the interior of humans, while the culture of the West developed toward exerting effort toward the external world. Just as the point of discussing instinct was to discuss the capacity to oppose instinct, and likewise the meaning of talking about the divisions between individual bodies is the purpose discussing how to overcome such divisions, the point of discussing religion is to discuss the Chinese people who have extricated themselves from religion. All of this is done in preparation for discussing people's hearts and minds.

Above I said that I have no way of directly entering into the topic at hand. In what follows I will attempt to bring us a step closer. My father began from his observation that Western culture is a culture of objects and proceeded to say that it was a culture of the body, an outward-oriented culture. What was its origin, its history, and its products and results? Compared with the more ambiguous Chinese culture, what are its positive and negative aspects? The great accomplishments of Western culture are obvious. That a single culture could exercise such overwhelming superiority and dominate the world is unprecedented in history. The greatest strength within the values of this culture—freedom of thought—has caused many Western scholars to faithfully look back and evaluate their own history. I say what I feel here. I have said this from the beginning. For in China even today we lack this spirit.

If we say that Chinese religion did not discuss the human interior enough, then we may say that the European Middle Ages, in which religion was overdeveloped, discussed the point at which people's hearts could not be constrained and why after this there was a huge advance in material culture. "Religion dominates people's mind," he remarked and gave a few examples, the most important of which I quote here: "Religion was the central focus of the era. It was the acme of the civilization." "A history of the Middle Ages that omitted the Church would amount to no history at all." "The Church of the Middle Ages was an utterly different entity from the Church of more recent times." "Whoever was a member of the Church…if they did not obey or believe the teachings of the Church, they were subject to the death penalty." "The Church owned a great amount of land and received the benefit

of tithing." "The Church was in reality no different from a state. It had its own laws and its own courts, and the power to imprison people for life." "The pope could make laws and regulate the territory of each country. In Western Europe, Latin was used by the Church as the unifying language." "At the lowest level of the Church was the [parish] priest....the parish church was the center of village life, and the priest was the leader of the village." "All private contracts, from will to marriages, were mediated by the church."[1]

We said above that Confucius did not give people a set of arbitrary rules. What of Europe? "…In 1539, the British Parliament passed "The Statute of Six Articles," which decreed that the blood and flesh of Christ were present in bread and wine used in the ceremony of Communion, and that all who dared doubt this would be burnt at the stake."[2] "Why did they so often resort to death by burning? Because they did not want to shed the person's blood, as spilling blood was against the dictates of the Church." "It was this barbaric two hundred years ago—who could imagine that two hundred years later it could become so civilized?....In modern times Western people have given up the medieval attitude that abstinence, purity, and prayer would lead to a heavenly heart, and again adopted the ancient Greek attitude of seeking satisfaction in this life and constantly moving forward. The fact that it quickly became the most civilized nation in the world is precisely due to this."[3]

Recall what we said above about man's attitude toward life and our emphasis on three points: this attitude is one of recognizing again, which is very different from unconsciously continuing along the same path. This is the result of consciously deciding what to keep and what to leave aside. It started from the recognition of "I" and affirming the self. This is the fundamental essence of "the awakening of mankind." Taking "I" as the point of departure, all things become objects to be demanded, things to be used, and objects to be conquered. Relations between man and nature and between man and man become divided and turn into oppositions. When this attitude is expressed to its limit, the highest civilization and the most barbaric savagery appear at the same time. The awakening of "I" caused Europeans to begin to seek happiness in this life. This was in accordance to the original order of the development of culture—the satisfaction of material needs. If there had not been this turning point, and if the closed-mindedness, parochialism, and prejudice of religion continued, and individuals continued in bigotry and cruelty, then many aspects of the present world would be inconceivable.

Below I will bring the discussion to another area: the intimate relationship between the structure of society and society's understanding of humanity. For example, the structure of Chinese society presents a family-centered ethical society.

---

[1] All quotations above are from He Bingsong, *A History of Pre-Modern Europe*.

[2] Editors note: The statue reads only that "the offender or offenders therein shall suffer the pains of death, and lose and forfeit all his and their goods, lands, and tenements as in cases of felony" and does not mention death by fire. Adams and Stephens (1901).

[3] Quotations from He Bingsong, *A History of Pre-Modern Europe*

Western society on the other hand displays an urban civilization. The first is peaceful and quiescent, while in the second everyone is moving forward and changes come quickly. The effect of the social structure on people's bodies and minds is obvious. What follows is my own thinking. In recent years I have noticed that Western scientists have shown great interest in understanding humanity, but they have not been able to make observations beyond the level of materiality (or the functions of the body). This is the particular strong point of Western civilization, but in this day it has become a limitation. Relying on instruments to make observations not only limits one to the level of visible objects but further limits observation to the scale of the individual, rendering society completely invisible. This omission is vast indeed!

What we have discussed above are the fundamental conditions for molding humankind today. But there is still one other aspect: After the transformation into humankind, the faculty of thinking places humans higher than all other living things. The faculty of thinking is none other than reason and rationality, and it can be separated into the two aspects of knowing and feeling. According to my father's idea, reason caused mankind to undergo a qualitative change. This so-called qualitative change is what makes humankind fundamentally different from animals, for it transcends merely living for the sake of living.

"The ability to think is a special characteristic of humanity—the advent of humanity lies precisely in this. Ancient China and the modern West have each developed this characteristic to remarkable levels." This essay began with my father's praise of humankind's vast abilities and exasperation over humanity's inability to manage itself today. This is what is being said here. According to his view, in ancient China, people developed reason under conditions of material insufficiency, while in the modern West, people gave their intelligence free reign and created every sort of invention but had failings in their attitude toward life, for they single-mindedly pursued the happiness of the individual while overlooking social harmony.

Then what is intellect? What is reason?[4] Please look to his explanation: Reason has a tendency to oppose instinct. They are potentially opposed, but not incompatible. "Only humankind's life depends in various ways on thinking; because of that, it can lead in many ways to error. To make a mistake but not be content in one's mistake, nothing is more precious than this. This is the meaning of reason. Because of this, reason is more precious than all else." Intellect and reason are two aspects of the function of the mind. The knowing aspect is called intellect, and the affective aspect is called reason. Intellect must soberly and objectively come to its conclusions. It is only after intellect arrives at the calm state of nonaction that it can function fully. The

[4]The author is using this term "reason" (lixing) in the sense that his father used it, which may confuse some readers. "Reason" refers not to the modern English or Chinese senses of the word, but rather to the "moral sense." Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the famous British poet and philosopher, used the word "reason" in this sense, setting it apart from "rationality," by which he meant the usual meaning of "reason." In the English-speaking world, the writer Cardinal Henry Newman used the term "illative sense" for the same meaning of "moral sense."

uses of the intellect are inexhaustible, but it does not offer judgments on particular questions of right and wrong. What allows for value judgment is reason.

Consider to the following statement: The creations of Western culture are outside of the body. It changes matter. It is not like the temperament of Confucianism, which is to change one's own self. Recall what we said above: Western culture exerts force toward the human exterior, while Chinese culture exerts force toward the human interior. My father's explanation of reason probably was aimed at emphasizing that it was part of self-consciousness and that one should not take a lackadaisical attitude toward one's own mistakes. But he also said that because he knew that it was easy for people to make mistakes, one should not frequently criticize others. This type of sympathetic understanding represents a great development of reason. I believe that this kind of harmony is not the kind of harmony that many people speak of today, for the latter presupposes the mediation of different interests. We should all recognize that what we are speaking of is a different kind of culture—one that directs force toward the human interior. "Exerting force toward the interior"—we may think that this sounds too abstract and that one would not know where to begin if one wanted to practice or develop it. This is a result of our being estranged from it for long period of times, so that it seems difficult to recover it. In my father's view, this is because the problems to be solved had not forced humanity to feel the need for it. Human understanding often lags behind the state of things, but humanity must eventually have an awakening and eventually take action. When the problems to be solved change, "then naturally a different kind of knowledge will emerge." "That the two cultures merge and be put right is to be expected." "We should know that of what is called orientation inward, the implication is that it is a shift from an outward orientation to an inward orientation; it does not involve any other change in direction. If it involves a direction, then it is outward again. As expected, limiting it causes one to enter life over and over. By studying what is lowly, one can gradually elevate oneself. The nature of life itself is to climb upward."

If we ask what sort of thinking did my father use to know humankind, perhaps it can be summarized like this: People have bodies and minds; humans have instincts, but because they have minds, they can resist their instincts. In the end, humankind has intellect and reason. The many expressions of humanity all follow from this. Animals only have bodies. Humans should therefore make efforts to elevate themselves.

Now I will return to the main topic: The reconstruction of Confucianism. Why was Mayan civilization lost? Where did the inhabitants of Easter Island go? We will find answers to these questions in the future. Humankind's blind application of force toward the outside world has created serious problems. There are endless calls for people to decrease carbon emissions. Today the environment is already clearly unable to sustain mankind's desire for material goods, and this is at a time when half of mankind lives in poverty. It is obvious that this mode of life cannot long continue. It is reasonable to say that it is time for mankind to change its attitude toward the environment. Great problems require a great awakening before they can be solved. An awakening must necessarily start with a small group of people. Or perhaps what is needed is not necessarily the reconstruction of Confucianism. Perhaps in a broad

sense, a group such as Greenpeace follows the same path. We might even say that objectively speaking, suffering brings us to the same path. It uses actual facts to push us toward that second attitude toward living, to have us rebuild a type of culture whose major thought is close to that of Confucianism.

This chapter was translated from the Chinese by the editor.

Reference

Adams, George Burton, and Stephens, Henry Morse, eds. Select documents of English Constitutional History, New York: The Macmillan Co.,1901. P. 59.